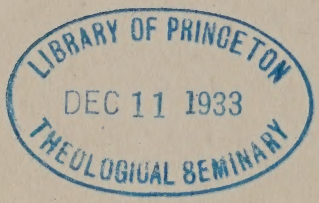
REBELS AND SAINTS

FERDINAND M. ISSERMAN



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REBELS AND SAINTS

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REBELS AND SAINTS

The Social Message of the Prophets of Israel

By FERDINAND M. ISSERMAN
Rabbi of Temple Israel, St. Louis
Chairman of the St. Louis Social Justice Commission

✧

Introduction by

WILLIAM SCARLETT
Bishop of the Diocese of Missouri
Protestant Episcopal Church

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INTRODUCTION

IT IS a privilege to commend this fresh and stimulating book, which I have read with deep interest and appreciation. In it the great prophets of Israel live again, move through our modern world, and apply the eternal principles they saw so clearly to the social conditions which confront us.

It would be difficult to find one more competent to write such a volume than Rabbi Isserman. He himself is in the Prophetic Succession. The spirit of the prophets of Israel is in him. The passion for social justice which fired them kindles his own soul, and has made him an outstanding leader of the forces of social righteousness in this community. He will not ask that the readers of this book agree with all his conclusions, but it is difficult to see how anyone can escape his challenge.

WILLIAM SCARLETT.

St. Louis
August, 1933.

FOREWORD

BELIEVING that the rabbi is the heir of the prophets and must attempt to carry out their functions in modern society, I could not, though tried with innumerable duties, refuse the invitation that the editor of *Front Rank* extended to me to write a series of articles on the social message of the ancient prophets of Israel. Hence this little book.

Perhaps no more propitious time than the present ever existed for the re-enunciation of prophetic ideals.

Around us we see a weary, desperate civilization, regarding the visions of the prophets as impractical utopias, driven to the brink of chaos, if not annihilation. With nationalism rampant, with barbarian ideals frankly championed by responsible leaders, with social injustice respectable, with machinery dominant, and man hopelessly caught in its meshes, many there are who believe that man has failed to maintain his civilization and that its end is at hand.

I believe that there is hope for man, hope that he may rise above his failure, and socially

and intelligently administer the power that is available to him.

If man will forget about chancelleries and chicanery, if he will turn to prophets and saints instead of to diplomats and lobbyists, if he will seek less advice at London and Geneva, and more at Jerusalem and Galilee, he may yet find the vision to save himself.

Although this book was prepared long before the Nazis came to power in Germany, the conflict between prophetism and Naziism will be evident on every page. The very Semitism against which prophetism revolted, and to supplant which Judaism was born, is now being espoused in Germany. Hitlerism and Judaism are eternal foes. Between them there can be no peace. Hitlerism like its ancient predecessor, Semitism, stands for the welfare of one nation, for the advancement of one race, if necessary at the expense of all others. Its ethics knows neither mercy nor kindness to those of alien blood. It professes to be anti-semitic. Actually it is semitic.

Professing to hate the Old Testament, the Nazis have made a religion of its most primitive elements. The nationalistic religion and tribal

ethics of the primitive Semites, is the Holy Grail of Nazi crusaders. Judaism is the revolt of the prophets against semitic religion. Judaism in that sense is anti-Semitism. Hence between it and Naziism, there must be perpetual warfare. That a Christian editor invites a rabbi to write about the social message of the prophets, for Christian readers, and that a Christian publishing house issues that message in book form is an inspiring contrast to and an illuminating commentary upon Nazi treatment of Jews.

To Moses Buttenwieser, professor of biblical exegesis at the Hebrew Union College, who introduced me to the prophets of Israel; to Gotthard Deutsch, who introduced me to prophetic living; to my parents, who cherished Judaism; to my wife, who is a continuous source of inspiration; and to countless co-workers who strive for social justice, I voice my thanks.

To some of my colleagues in the rabbinate, who like Stephen S. Wise, Samuel H. Goldenson, Harry W. Ettelson, and Abba Hillel Silver, have had prophetic ministries, I shall ever be grateful for their example.

I am glad to have Bishop Scarlett write the introduction. He is a prophetic voice—fearlessly and courageously serving the noblest causes of humanity. Our common interest in and appreciation of the prophetic heritage has been the mortar which has cemented our friendship.

Perhaps eventually this recognition of partnership in the prophetic heritage will enable Jew and Christian, united in fellowship, to achieve the Kingdom of God.

F. M. I.

Temple Israel, St. Louis
August, 1933.

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THE TASK OF THE PROPHETS OF ISRAEL

THE TASK OF THE PROPHETS OF ISRAEL

ONE of the oldest Jewish congregations in the United States, organized at the close of the Revolutionary War, had prepared for the inauguration of a young, progressive rabbi. Led by the officers, the rabbi stepped into the pulpit. The congregation gasped. He was hatless. In accordance with a centuries-old custom, Jews at worship wore hats. This young rabbi, a reformer, had removed his. Many of the congregation followed his example. Others did not. A few resigned and organized a new congregation. One of those who resigned built a large synagogue as a protest against the radicalism of this spiritual leader. Sixty years have passed since this incident and the disaffection over it has not yet completely subsided. When I served in that congregation a few years ago, some of its leaders persisted in wearing their hats during worship. The custom of praying with covered heads was copied by Jews from Mohammedans. In the course of centuries, it acquired divine sanction. The conscientious ob-

jectors to its abolition may have felt that a custom instituted by God may not be discarded by man. They may have regarded it as another concealed attempt to destroy the distinctiveness of the Jew. Whatever their reasons, a very unimportant item in the ritual of a congregation stirred up a tempest. Its elimination was bitterly opposed.

The experience of this congregation has countless parallels. A Christian denomination split into two because of a diversity of opinion on partial and total immersion at baptism. A Protestant sect was organized because of a difference over the technique of church organization. Several Presbyterian assemblies rose in thunderous protest because a gifted Baptist preacher graced and distinguished one of their church pulpits. Complaints are still being voiced far and wide because an Episcopal bishop permitted the use of his cathedral for worship by men of other denominations.

Men resist change. They resent the new in everything, but especially in religion, because they know least about it. The tendency to resist the novel is shared by all. Men live in constant dread that the unforeseen may jeopardize their

security. The new, the untried, they instinctively fear. Its effect upon their futures is uncertain. The greater the coward, the more intense his hostility to change. Fear of the displeasure of God or gods has been the brake which has prevented change in religion. The above illustrations indicate how in an age of science and education, of communication, of transportation, when men's minds are being deprovincialized and deparochialized, when world contacts and associations are thrust upon all, there yet can remain that vehement, fierce resentment against the new, even among the inessentials in religion.

Understanding that, we can appreciate the tremendous task which confronted the prophets of Israel. Their concerns were not merely with changing commas in the ritual. They were determined to remould and to recast the ritual, the religious emphasis, and the religious philosophy of a people. They essayed upon that heroic venture in an age when literacy was rare, when it was difficult to reach men's minds, when religion dominated the state and society, when religious loyalties were intense. When, a few years ago, Percy Stickney Grant from his pulpit

in a fashionable New York church attacked some orthodox doctrines of the Episcopal communion and stated that they were untenable in our age, the great denomination to which he belonged, many of whose communicants and whose lay and religious leaders shared his views, found it expedient to regard them as heretical. Imagine, therefore, how blasphemous the prophetic attack upon cult, upon tribal gods, must have seemed to the people of the eighth century before the present era.

There are those who, reading the hostility with which ancient Israel regarded their prophets, may look with scorn upon that people. How insensitive to spiritual values they were! How idolatrous! How avaricious! How heartless! Such critics are guilty of an error. They are judging the people of Israel by modern and not by ancient standards. To understand the shock that the utterances of the prophets brought to the ancient religious Hebrew, one must endeavor to put oneself in his frame of mind. The prophets denounced everything that was sacred to him. Imagine the fate of the preacher in many a church in our country who would declare as mythical what most Christians regard as funda-

mental in their religion, and would add that religion was foisted on man by artful priesthoods. That he would be unfrocked, ostracized, is indubitable. Yet many of these assertions have already been made by scholars of integrity, by philosophers, by thinkers, by scientists. Such a preacher would not stand alone.

But the prophets did stand alone. No one had voiced their views before. No one had written in defense of them. The sanction for them was the consciousness that their inspiration came from God. Standing with God, they had the courage to face their fellows with their new ideals. That the prophets were permitted to preach at times, that their messages were preserved in the national library, the Bible, that they influenced religion and morals, the law and the state, is to the credit of the ancient Hebrews, and is an index of their comparative hospitality to new ideas and of their religious genius. Rather than cavil about the hostile reception received by the prophets, when we consider their radical, heretical mission, we cannot but appreciate the forebearance of the people before whom they pleaded. How hospitable would we in America be, aye, how hospitable are we in America,

to those who openly declare their intention to tear our constitution to tatters? The prophets attacked not merely the political constitution but also the religious faith of their believing age. At times kings and peoples listened to them. Jeremiah denouncing the temple-cult was a thousand times more heretical in his age than the wildest communist is in ours.

In the popular mind, the prophets are apt to be confused with soothsayers, with fortune-tellers, or with predictors of events. There were these in ancient Israel. There were the Urim and Thummim, the oracles which men consulted. There were the witches, to one of whom Saul went. There must have been attempts to communicate with the dead; Sir Oliver Lodge's spiritualism was anticipated. There were also professional prophets who served as court advisers. But these must not be confused with the prophets, the literary prophets of Israel. The word for prophet in Hebrew is *Nabi*. It means "to speak forth." The prophets were forth-tellers. They spoke boldly and forthrightly on spiritual and moral issues. They were the world's first preachers. They believed themselves divinely inspired and under

compulsion to speak out. They were not members of existing professional prophetic guilds.

Amos, replying to the priest at Bethel, who had challenged his right to speak, said: "I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son; but I was a herdsman, and a dresser of sycomore-trees; and the Lord took me from following the flock, and the Lord said unto me, Go, prophesy unto My people Israel." (Amos 7:14, 15.) Amos did not train to be a prophet, nor was he one by profession. He was a shepherd and heard the voice of God, whose clarion call he could not gainsay. Isaiah likewise felt this divine stirring within him. He, too, did not feel qualified to become a moral teacher in Israel. Only after glowing coals had purified his lips and God had reassured him did he feel prepared to embark upon the prophetic ministry. Jeremiah, too, could not resist the fire within him and was driven to his thankless but immortal work. The prophets were God-conscious men, sensitive to spiritual values, who could not keep within their souls the moral and spiritual truths that they perceived. They had to speak. The divine urge mastered and drove them. They spoke regardless of consequences. It was

as if a being other than themselves dwelt within them and coerced them to prophesy. They were but the voices through which God made known his truths, God's passive instruments. For their age they redefined God and his demands upon men. How beautifully the prophet Micah expressed it: "It hath been told thee, O man, what is good. And what the Lord doth require of thee, only to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God."

The founder of this new line of prophets was Nathan, court prophet to King David. What Nathan's functions originally were is a matter of speculation. Very likely he consulted oracles for the king and performed similar duties. But he marched out of the line of his regular routine when David sinned by bringing about the death of Uriah, the Hittite. Then Nathan the prophet burst the bonds of his profession, told the king the parable of the rich man who took the poor man's lamb, and when David, seething with indignation, demanded to know the name of the criminal, Nathan in tones that have reverberated throughout the ages said, "Thou art the man" (2 Sam. 12:7). Thus did Nathan upset the traditions of existing prophetic guilds and blaze

the trail in which Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Micah, and Jesus have walked. Nathan became a moral teacher and a truth-teller, boldly accusing a powerful ruler of moral perfidy at the height of his career. Nathan may be called the father of the prophetic movement in Israel. Elijah and Elisha followed in his footsteps but left no literary records. Amos was the first of the literary prophets whose ideals have weathered the ages. The movement begun by Nathan in the reign of King David flowered in the prophets of the eighth century, the first of whom was Amos, the shepherd of Tekoa.

Why did this prophetic movement arise in Israel? A generation less steeped in psychology than ours might have answered by urging that the appearance of genius in nations and individuals is inexplicable. This may have ultimately to be our answer. There are biblical scholars who believe that certain environmental factors made inevitable the appearance of prophecy in Israel. Ernest Renan, regarding the Semites as an inferior race, attributed the prophets' discovery of ethical monotheism to the geography of Palestine. Others attribute it to

historical and social conditions plus. The plus is the unknown quantity, the genius element which thus far defies human research. These scholars contend that the prophetic movement in Israel arose as a result of the clash between the civilization of the desert, where the Hebrew tribes originated, and the civilization of Palestine, between pastoral and agricultural customs, between the simple life of the shepherd and the complex, complicated life of the city-dweller, between the religion of the desert and the religion of Canaan.

Yahveh, who became the God of Israel, was a desert deity. He dwelt on Sinai or on Horeb, desert mountains. Life in the desert was simple and harsh. It was unsettled. The nomad had only sheep for sustenance and these he had to lead to green pastures and fresh water. If his sheep perished, the shepherd perished with them. Abodes were temporary and hence no elaborate homes could be built. None of the civilized arts could flourish. Food was scarce. The law of hospitality was dominant. To refuse to shelter a stranger in the vast expanse of the desert, was to condemn him to death. Nomads dwelt in clans. The clans owned their

herds in common. The tribe ate or starved together. There were no rich. There were no poor—or rather, all were poor. There was the camaraderie which poverty inspired. The simplicity, the genuine fellowship, the social ownership of all goods, the conditions which living in the desert made necessary—these composed the way of life which Yahveh their desert deity offered, sanctioned, and championed.

When the Hebrew tribes, wearying of their precarious existence, began slowly to infiltrate into Palestine, their joys at the comparative ease of life were mitigated by their revulsion against those practices which that life made possible. There was greater leisure. There was more food. There was even a surplus of food. There was speculating in land. Some men began to own all the land. Others worked for them. Soon the workers were exploited. Human beings were avaricious then as now. Castes arose. There were rich and poor. For debts, some Hebrews became slaves to others. All these new social phenomena challenged the desert-dwellers. Further, the Baals, the Canaanitish gods, products of a richer civilization, with grander rituals, made lavish demands. Deities

of the soil and fertility, through their priests they encouraged and demanded licentious practices. Their temples were provided with sacred prostitutes, who were the symbols of fertility, and whose practice of their profession was believed to stimulate the richness of the soil.

The desert God Yahveh demanded no intricate ritual and permitted no such indulgences in passions. Yahveh knew nothing about crops and fertility. Thus the scene was set for a conflict—between two cultures and two civilizations. Yahveh and Baal were fighting a duel for the soul of a people—aye, for the soul of a civilization. The prophetic bands were the champions of Yahveh, not merely maintaining his supremacy, but also championing the simple, wholesome, socially co-operative way of life, hating luxury and extravagance in living and in religion. Arrayed against these bands were the tendencies of the new civilization, the human love for leisure and the desire of the strong to rule and to take advantage of the weak. The prophets, champions of Yahveh, denounced the cult, championed the underprivileged, hated the castes, defended the weak, the widow, the orphan, the stranger, the slave.

How well Amos fits into this picture! He was a shepherd. He came to the cities, saw the inequalities, the vices of the powerful, the suffering of the weak, the elaborate ritual accompanied with cruel tyranny, and he burst forth into indignation which stirs to this day. "Not this does the Lord require, but let justice well up like water and righteousness like a mighty stream." Thus do scholars explain for moderns the drama in which were forged the souls and the minds of the prophets of Israel.

The prophets were more than merely champions of Yahveh, the desert-god. They changed the popular conception of him completely, so that his earliest worshipers could not have recognized him. As they redefined the character of Yahveh, they revolutionized the religion of their people. With them, Judaism is born. Moses may have presided at its conception, the prophets at its birth. Before the prophets the religion of the ancient Hebrews was hardly to be distinguished from the religion of other semitic tribes. Their gods were considered to be tribal or national. They lived in sacred stones or mountains. They fought for their people. They were ruthless to other peo-

ples. They demanded no ethical conduct. They were appeased with bribes of sacrifice and of frankincense. They were vain and at times fickle. They had to be courted constantly, not only with the choicest of cattle and of fruits but even with the choicest of life, the first-born. Such simple, primitive gods were the gods of the ancient Hebrews. The prophets led the revolt against these gods. Judaism begins with that revolt. Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Micah, Deutero—Isaiah, the author of the Book of Jonah, and Jesus, were leaders in that revolution. The result of their efforts was that the nationalistic, ruthless Yahveh became the God of love of all men, the God as defined in the Book of Jonah, the God who demands "lovingkindness and not sacrifice," the God who loves Nineveh as well as Jerusalem.

It is a commonplace on the part of Christian preachers, theologians, and polemics to contrast the God-idea of the Old Testament with that of the New, and thus to illustrate the superiority of Christianity over Judaism. Equally common is the habit of many writers, even liberal writers, to speak of the ethics of the Jew as summed up by the verse, "An eye for an eye, a tooth for a

tooth, a life for a life," in contrast with the merciful ethics of Jesus. Not only does the ethics of Jesus come from Jewish life and teaching and environment, not only is the ethics of the Jew not limited by the Old Testament, but the ethics of the Old Testament cannot be limited to the law of retaliation. Against its ethics the prophets revolted. The *lex talionis* was universal among all peoples at that time in world history. Long after the Jews under the influence of prophetic leadership discarded it, it was retained by many peoples, now Christian, and to this day it is written in the philosophy of law of many nations, including our own. The cruel, avenging deity, found in the pages of the Bible, is no more the God of the modern Jew than he was the God of Jesus of Nazareth. That God-idea represents a step in the evolution of religion of the ancient Hebrews. All other religions passed through similar stages. It was the accepted God-idea until the prophets redefined God for the Hebrews and for the Western world. Not the avenging, tribal, narrow, cult-demanding deity of primitive peoples, but the just, loving, merciful, universal, social-justice demanding God of the prophets, of the

author of Jonah, of Jesus, is and has been the professed God of the Jew, centuries before the birth of Christianity, before the New Testament was written. This God-idea, challenging the world, was developed and defined in the souls of the prophets and given by them to their people at the expense of their life, of their liberty, and of their happiness.

Though the prophetic teachings shook the ancient Hebrew religious world, and though the prophets were lonely, suffering men, yet their work bore fruit, as their ideals were written into the constitution of their people. The Book of Deuteronomy with its attempts to establish monotheism, by outlawing all shrines except the temple in Jerusalem, reveals the effect of prophetic teachings. The biblical law to protect the poor, the widow, the stranger (Lev. 19), the laws about the freedom of slaves, the laws about the return of the land to the original owners after fifty years, the Sabbath day of rest for master and for slave and even for animals, the command to "love thy neighbor as thyself," all coming after the prophets, prove that their teachings were not in vain among their own people.

Even as the legislation in Israel was affected by the prophets, so also the national literature. The Bible, the national library of the ancient Hebrews, commences with the story of creation of the entire world. Rabbinical commentators point out that God did not create Jews first nor white men first. He created Adam, man, so that no man, no race, and no nation should ever lay claim to superiority. The creation story in the first chapter of the Bible assumes the existence of a God of the universe, who is spiritual, and also assumes the equality of all races before him. This reveals the effect prophetic teachings had on Israel. The Jacob-Israel story likewise testifies to that. Jacob is a very despicable character. He cheats his aged and blind father. He mulcts his patrimony from his brother. Such a trickster becomes the founder of a religious people and their hero. Prior to prophetic teaching, stealing from other tribes other than one's own (Jacob and Esau were symbols of tribes and nations) not only was sanctioned but the successful stealer became a tribal hero. After the prophets had taught, and their teachings had penetrated the masses of Israel, a hero like Jacob was unpalatable and unsavory to the new

Hebrew conscience. By prophetic writers his story was rewritten. He was given a new name, Israel, the champion of God. A change of name implied a change of character. That Jacob had to become Israel, the deceiver a champion of God, testifies that the spiritual and ethical seeds of the prophets had fallen on fertile soil among their own people.

Why is Jesus among the prophets of Israel? Christian scholars will say that he is the greatest of the prophets and Jewish scholars will insist that he added nothing to the religion of the author of Jonah. It is difficult to measure the comparative greatness of men. Without Amos, there could have been no Jesus. If we judge by the influence men have exerted, then we have an inadequate standard. The influence that men have exerted may have been due to extraneous circumstances, or to gifted followers. As far as the Jewish scholars' views are concerned, it may be said that after Amos and Hosea had spoken, everything in the prophetic message was implicit in their words. The prophets not only amplified the implications of ethical monotheism. They contributed themselves, their personalities, their way of saying their message. Their bold-

ness and courage and life gave the prophetic message reality and vitality. Surely Jesus did that, and therefore belongs in the ranks of the prophets of Israel.

Difficult as it is to make changes in ritual and theology today, even more difficult was it in the eighth century before the present era. The prophets boldly assumed the mission of converting the religion of their people from primitive Semitism to ethical monotheism. They thus became immortal figures, benefactors of the race. Though the task they undertook was gigantic, they neither faltered nor feared. For us remains the task of weaving their aspirations and hopes into the fabric of our civilization.

AMOS

Spiritual Pioneer, Monotheist, and Prophet of Social Justice

AMOS

Spiritual Pioneer, Monotheist, and Prophet of Social Justice

IF ANYTHING might be called the symbol of America's prosperity, it was the Easter Parade in Atlantic City in 1929. To that shore resort, the social élite of the nation had thronged for an interlude of play to herald the advent of spring. Weeks before the festival, hotel reservations had been oversubscribed. When Easter dawned, the boardwalk must have been crowded. Tailors and designers had been busy for months and months to prepare the new styles which a wealthy clientele demanded. Jewelry, silks, all the signs of luxury and wealth must have been in evidence. Imagine if some unkempt factory toiler, haggard from overwork, dressed in tattered garb, had mounted a box on the boardwalk and had commenced to berate the crowd. Imagine him, having seen his coworkers laid off, and machinery replacing them, his wages remaining static, while the profits of his firm trebled and its stock rose in value on

the exchange boards. Envision him brooding over the prosperity of a nation which masked the suffering of his comrades, proceeding to air his grievances publicly. Think of him denouncing the religion of the crowds, who were satisfied to carouse on unearned profits, while slums and poverty existed about them. Conceive of him attacking churches, synagogues, and cathedrals, all religious institutions and leaders, for their complaisance in the face of social iniquities. See him denouncing the prevalent political corruption and scorning the society which encouraged greed and avarice, applauded the strong, trampled upon the weak, and yet believed its conduct to be just and ethical. How long would such an infuriated speaker have been tolerated by these gaily appareled, virtuous, and smug crowds? Would he not have been arrested for creating a public nuisance, branded as a "Red," or sent to a sanitarium?

Such must have been the crowd's reaction to Amos, the shepherd of Tekoa, the dresser of sycamore trees, who at Beth-El, where the élite of Israel had gathered to celebrate a great festival midst revelry and feasting, rose and de-

nounced the religion, the morality, and the manners of his countrymen. How could anyone accuse them of impiety? Had they not just brought their fat rams to the altars of Yahveh? Why assail them? Had their armies not been victorious, an evidence of divine favor? Did they not enjoy prosperity? How dare this simple shepherd rise and excoriate them at the moment of their greatest triumph?

To Amos' simple shepherd's soul, the revelry and misery which then as now dwelt side by side in populous cities, must have come as a shocking revelation. In the desert, life was hard and simple. Surplus was unknown. What a man had, he shared with his dear ones, with his clan, with his tribe, with the stranger who came into his tent. To refuse so to share meant to doom one's fellow-man to death. The barest necessities of life were available to all. To feast while one's neighbor starved was unknown in the desert moral code. Holding such a philosophy, Amos' righteous indignation at the class distinctions and inequalities of wealth which he saw in the crowded cities of Israel is understandable. His moral nature rose in thunderous eloquent revolt. These crowds trampling upon

the poor, selling the needy for silver, exploiting the weak; these fashionable, luxury-loving women, indifferent to the miserable slums at their gates; these barons driving hard bargains with the humble and carousing with their ill-gotten gains—these are immoral, ungodly. These cannot win the favor of Yahveh no matter how rich their burnt-offerings, for Yahveh covets neither feasts nor solemn assemblies, neither peace-offerings nor fat beasts, neither robed choirs nor elaborate ritual, but that "justice well up like water and righteousness like a mighty stream."

When Amos saw that wherever he went the situation at Beth-El was repeated, rich living side by side with the poor, religion and cult-observance considered synonymous, indifference to human suffering, social iniquities sanctioned and approved by the nation, he knew that its punishment was certain and its doom inevitable. His God, a moral God, demanded obedience to his moral laws above everything. His God would punish social immorality. Amos saw that there were moral laws in the universe which, like natural laws, carried penalties for those who violated them. So thoroughly foul

and rotten seemed the social fabric of his people that he believed its destruction was imminent. To those who said that Yahveh, the God of Israel, would not afflict Israel Amos thundered that Yahveh is a God of justice and would punish all wrongdoers, even his own people. Amos hastened to add that his God deemed the Ethiopians and Egyptians as precious as the Hebrews. For to him it appeared that God ruled over the universe and not over one nation, and that all peoples were his children. With these ideals of Amos, the tribal semitic God of the ancient Hebrews was doomed. He was replaced with a God who rules over all humanity. Amos' God was universal and with his teaching of the universality of one God, Judaism was born. Thus did this bold prophet destroy forever the primitive religion of the ancient Semites and sow the seed for the development of ethical monotheism.

Even as in Amos' generation, so too in our own, prosperity is not a sign of godliness. Like Amos, we have learned through bitter experience that a nation which violates the moral laws of the universe cannot avert the day of reckoning. Poverty and luxury cannot continue to live side by side. Palatial residences and

miserable tenements cannot continue in one community. Increasing capital and decreasing consuming power are violations of moral as well as of economic laws. We had no prophets like Amos in 1929 to warn us of impending disaster. If we had them, their still small voices were unheard in the mad hysteria of prosperity. But the day of God, of reckoning, has come. We as a nation have tolerated social iniquity and the doom has descended upon us. Our suffering is due to a lack of moral will and of spiritual vision. In the words of Amos our famine is "not a famine of bread nor a thirst for water but of hearing the words of our Lord." Our famine is spiritual and moral. We have more food, more clothing, more fuel than we can possibly consume and men die of starvation, go clad in rags, and freeze in the winter. We have brains, capital, machinery—everything to make physical life comfortable and secure. We only lack godliness, moral character, spiritual vision. We are a nation of sinners and now we pay the penalty. If only like Amos, modern prophets could thunder forth to a people whose eyes would see and whose ears hear, and whose hearts feel and minds understand, "Seek ye

the Lord and live" . . . "Establish justice in the land." Thus might we atone for our sins and avert the impending doom and chaos.

Nor can this social justice be limited to America. It must include the entire family of nations. The moral laws of the universe apply not to America alone. Even as God is not only the God of Israel, so he is not only the God of America. Those who cry for isolation, for American self-sufficiency, are reverting to the worship of national gods, however noble the creeds they utter or however universal the inscriptions over their sanctuaries. The moral law applies to all nations. Justice for mankind must be the new slogan. Not Israel first or alone, not America first or alone, but Ethiopian and Egyptian, German and Japanese—all these have a right to justice, and no human being who claims to worship the God of the universe can ignore that right.

Amos preached almost twenty-seven hundred years ago. His message is old. Our age has turned its back upon the old and feverishly and vainly has sought its salvation in the new. Our generation lies spiritually prostrate. Perhaps the old moral medium of Amos of Tekoa may

yet lead to its regeneration. Were the merry-makers at Beth-El in the eighth century before Jesus more fortunate than the Easter paraders in Atlantic City in 1929? The former at least heard an Amos.

HOSEA

Prophet of Love, Whose Faith in Man Destroyed Crime and Penitentiaries

HOSEA

Prophet of Love, Whose Faith in Man Destroyed Crime and Penitentiaries

GREAT as was the message of Amos, it was in some respects defective," writes a former teacher of mine at whose feet I have sat and who unraveled for me the mysterious beauty of many great world religions. This view is shared by many. Amos is regarded as the prophet of stern, almost harsh, justice who seems satisfied with the impending destruction of his people. Hosea, on the other hand, no less insistent on the validity of the moral law than Amos, is yet the prophet of love who perceives that "in God the fatherless findeth mercy" and that he will heal their backsliding and love them freely despite their iniquities. The harshness of Amos stands out in contrast with the mercy of Hosea. While the judgment of my teacher of Amos is correct, it is yet wrong. The first automobile was a crude contraption in comparison with the splendid sixteen-cylinder machines now made. Yet would it not be wrong merely to

speak of the defects in the first automobile? Its inventor was a pioneer. Others, of course, improved upon his work. His was a marvelous revolutionary achievement which has altered the face of civilization. Is it not fairer to speak of the first automobile in this fashion than to indicate its defects?

Amos, too, was a pioneer, a spiritual pioneer. He discovered a new law—a moral law, which binds men and nations. He blazed a new trail and began the evolution of ethical religions. Of course, his religion, when compared with that of modern men, reveals defects. But when we contrast Amos' religion with the popular religion of his day, when we see how his religion, incomplete though it may be, has been professed and not practiced even to this day, then we see his inestimable majesty and the loftiness of his message as well as the profundity of his insight into the nature of God. Amos took the first step in the development of that religious philosophy which is accepted today by Western peoples. What Newton did for physics, Amos did for morality. Even though Einstein's law of relativity may displace Newton's law of gravitation, the service of Newton to science stands,

and his greatness is in no wise tarnished. So too with Amos. Hosea added to the religious structure which Amos commenced, even as we today may add to the religious structure transmitted to us by our forefathers. Their religion was not defective. We have merely outgrown it. Without their religious background ours would be impossible. Without Amos' spiritual discovery, the spiritual message of Hosea, of Jeremiah, and Israel's other prophets would not have been possible.

Hosea shared with Amos the conviction of the existence of a moral law and the inevitability of punishment for those who violated it. Like Amos, he, too, knew that Israel had violated that law, and therefore its doom was inevitable. "Destruction unto them! for they have transgressed against Me" (Hosea 7:13). "They sow the wind and they shall reap the whirlwind" (8:7). "Israel hath forgotten his Maker, and builded palaces, . . . but I will send a fire upon his cities, and it shall devour the castles thereof" (8:14). "My God will cast them away, because they did not hearken unto Him, and they shall be wanderers among the nations" (9:17). In such words does Hosea agree with his older con-

temporary, Amos, that the idolatry of Israel, its worship of false gods, has led it astray and will bring upon its head the direst of punishment.

But Hosea's thinking did not end there. Tragedy entered his life and mellowed him. Sympathy, mercy, compassion, these softer qualities, are born in men from suffering, pain, and agony. The tenderest, kindest, most sympathetic peoples are those who have been most persecuted. To have suffered oneself makes one capable of understanding the suffering of others. Hosea's happiness was blasted by the infidelity of his wife. She whom he had led to the altar had become a prostitute. He cast her off and she had become a slave. But despite her waywardness he continued to love her. Because he loved her, he purchased her freedom and tried to redeem her, so that once more she would reign over his household and bear him children. Not to punish her for her iniquity, not to destroy her (even though the death penalty was exacted in the law of the Semite against the adulteress) but to redeem her, to salvage her, to restore the beauty in her. Not punishment but salvation. Not the harsh law of stern jus-

tice, but the helping hand of kindness and of mercy. Hosea's heretical attitude to the sinner was inspired by his God. The new insight into the divine nature of God, which he acquired from his own experience, he began to apply to his people.

Was not Israel the bride of God? Had she not proved faithless? Had she not attached her loyalties to the Baals, the agricultural deities of the Canaanites? Had she not violated the covenant of Sinai? But no longer could Hosea reason with Amos. His own experiences had taught him. The lover seeks not the destruction of the beloved. Her waywardness he seeks to correct, her sins to conquer, her beauty to develop. Will God be harsher to his bride, Israel, than the prophet had been to his bride, Gomer? The popular view, even the view of Amos, was that the sinner must be punished, but the divine view, the new ethics enunciated by Hosea, the fruit of his communing with God, was that the sinner must be redeemed, and the beloved adulteress must be won back to decent wifehood and motherhood.

Thus speaks the prophet in the name of his God: "I will not execute the fierceness of mine

anger . . . for I am God and not man; the Holy One in the midst of thee; and I will not come in wrath" (Hosea 11:9). Israel will escape the deserved penalty for its follies, because God is merciful as well as just and the broken covenant he will renew, ruling his people with the law of righteousness and justice, loving-kindness, compassion and faithfulness. To Amos, the God of justice must punish Israel as well as Ethiopia for its sins. But to Hosea, the love of God is such that the punishment of the sinner is to be redemptive and not retributive. Israel, penitent, returning to its earlier loyalties, will yet have a glorious future. Thus did Hosea transform the God of the ancient Semites into a God of love and mercy and add the second step in the evolution of ethical monotheism, the religion of Jew, of Christian, and of Mohammedan.

Many of us today sit back in complacent smugness and cast our withering scorn upon the defective religion of these ancient Hebrews and their contemporaries. Ours is a God of love. Not the fierce Jehovah, not the God of righteous indignation of Amos, but the God who forgives, who redeems, who salvages. If such be

our God-belief, then we have been more faithless than Israel. For not to that God have we been paying homage. Not by that God were our social conventions sanctioned, our criminal laws approved. Where in the intervening centuries, the twenty-five hundred or more years that have elapsed since Hosea's beautiful prophecies have become articulate, where do we find, on the part of social groups, yea, on the part of ecclesiastical organizations, that love and mercy for the weak, for the fallen, for the criminal, which is the kernel of the prophet's message? The religion of love has been but professed.

The Jew in the eyes of the Christian world has been a sinner for centuries. He is falsely accused of having brought about the crucifixion of Jesus. He is by polemics accused of having sold the master for thirty pieces of silver. He is said to have witnessed Jesus and rejected him. Granting, which the Jew does not, that the Jew of history was a sinner, a great sinner in the eyes of the organized church, how did that church, consecrated and dedicated to the love enunciated by Hosea and proclaimed by Jesus, attempt to win that sinner? By kindness? By

compassion? By mercy? No! By torture! By persecution! By hatred! By the Inquisition! No, the church has sought to drag, to bludgeon the Jew to the foot of the cross. Where, then, this compassion for the sinner!

A few years ago *The American Mercury* was banned in Boston because of one of its short stories, "Hatrack." It told of the tragic experiences of a fallen woman who came to a church for courage and spiritual strength, who came to the God of compassion and mercy for forgiveness. God forgave her but not the people of his church, over which his name was emblazoned. They shunned her. They despised her. They moved their seats from where she sat and prayed. They downed and doomed her, and yet they called God love. In atheistic soviet Russia the fallen woman who lives by the passions of her body is taught a lucrative trade, that she may make a good livelihood in less reprehensible fashion. In that act of humanity of the materialistic atheists I see an unconscious allegiance to the God of Hosea, whereas in the hostility of respectable folk to fallen women, I see the primitive religion of barbarians.

Where in our criminal and penal code do we discern the understanding and sympathy of Hosea? What brutalities man, professing the God of love, has heaped upon his fellow-man in the name of religion! How many were the sins, many of them legal and not moral, for which man exacted the death penalty! Not so long ago children were executed in England for disobedience to parents. Hundreds of offenses, many of them petty, brought the noose upon the culprit. Even today what attempt is made in those states where the death penalty is in vogue, to carry out the philosophy of mercy of Hosea? Do we, society, not say to certain sinners, men and women, who in the grip of passion or of bestiality have taken life, that their doom is inevitable? What of our penitentiaries, medieval in construction, medieval in administration! No attempt is made in most of them to carry out the spirit of the eighth-century prophet. Send men to jails where there are no opportunities for rehabilitation of character, for education, for preparation for useful citizenship, where guards, frequently illiterate and ignorant, encourage drug and other debilitating traffic, where brutality reigns and you doom them

more irrevocably than Amos doomed Israel. We assert that we subscribe to the love of Hosea, and yet are satisfied to be silent partners in crushing the character of the law-violators in our midst. Where is the spirit of the prophet Hosea in the mad frenzy for the restoration of the whipping post, for severer and more brutal penalties so prevalent in our country?

Our people, stampeded by a crime wave whose causes we refuse to recognize because we lack the courage to attack them, are wishing that judges, with long terms of imprisonment would work the miracle which society through education and social justice should accomplish. Perhaps, as in Hosea's age, our apostasy from his values is due to ignorance. Hosea complains of the lack of knowledge of God which is the basis for Israel's apostasy.

Perhaps our generation too lacks knowledge, not of God, but of man. A chief of police recently told me that criminals are born. That chief of police, uttering a platitude generally accepted, knows not whereof he speaks. He was appointed to his office because of his war record. Hence he became an authority on criminology and an expert in human nature. Ev-

ery criminologist and sociologist and anthropologist knows that criminals are made and not born. Criminals are made by society, by slums, by lack of educational facilities, by poverty, by unemployment, by tolerated political corruption. A study of juvenile delinquency in Chicago revealed that its greatest incidence was not among any race, nationality or creed but among residents in certain localities. As these residents moved to better neighborhoods, juvenile delinquency declined among their offspring. There was none in the wealthy residential districts, not because criminals are not born to the wealthy but, because in an environment of affluence there is less need for crime.

Our generation must learn that criminals are made. Then it will be able to apply the spiritual outlook of Hosea to the lawbreaker. The institution of juvenile courts and their kindlier treatment of youthful offenders is a step in the right direction. Redemption and not retribution must become the animating spirit of our penal code. Alfred E. Smith, when governor of New York, suggested in his last message to the legislature that courts determine the guilt of the offender and that his treatment, i.e., his punishment, be

left to educators, psychiatrists, criminologists and sociologists. Alfred Smith here revealed that he had grasped the message of Hosea.

At the root of Hosea's teaching is faith in man, faith in his character, faith in his redemptiveness, faith in the indestructibility of his spiritual nature. The clouds of glory which man "trails with him from afar," according to the poet, may be concealed by life's experiences, but they cannot be dissipated. In the most hardened and brutal there smolders the divine flame which kindness and understanding and knowledge can blow into a conflagration. Wasserman in "The Maurizius Case" suggested this faith when he said that a hardened life-convict refused to escape from prison because the guard, whom he could have slain, had given him some cigarettes three weeks prior and had shown him some kindness. This social outcast possessed enough spiritual beauty to refuse to purchase freedom at the expense of the life of one who had done him a slight favor.

That sums up the philosophy of the prophet. Israel was false to God. It was corrupt. It offered sacrifices to a God who desired loving-kindness. It reveled in the sensuality of Ca-

naanitish cults. It had merited severe punishment. But in that corrupt people, the prophet saw the hope of spiritual redemption. If we today could have similar faith in our fellowmen, we could eliminate much of the harshness in our society. We would see in our wayward fellow-men not outcasts to be loathed but sons of God who have lost their way, blinded by errors of omission and commission. With this point of view, we could make the love of Hosea not merely an ideal glibly professed but a pillar of society, elevating man and thus declaring the glory of God.

ISAIAH

The Prophet Who Warred for Pacifism

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THAT the Holy Land has been the battlefield of empires is one of the ironies of history. Perhaps it is not. Because Palestine connects three great continents, because it was the highway of commercial caravans and the route over which conquerors led their armies, it was the land where humanity was to receive its noblest vision of peace. Isaiah lived in Jerusalem at a time when restless empires, avid for conquest and for power, were rattling their swords and equipping their armies. Egypt and Assyria were to lock horns over supremacy. The Judaean, Israelitish, and Syrian kingdoms were caught between the jaws of these mighty nations. How futile for these tiny peoples to lift their puny arms against the giants who surrounded them! How stupid to make alliances and counter-alliances! Neither sword nor spear could save Judah or Israel. If they were to be saved from complete destruction, a power mightier than man had to do so. Perhaps this logic of historic circumstances subconsciously led

the prophet Isaiah to discover that only by faith in the spiritual can men and nations endure. Perhaps the suffering and destruction of war which he had witnessed led him to phrase the peace dream for humanity.

The frantic peoples among whom he lived, fearful of the rising power of Assyria and Egypt, sought to meet them in the usual way of international diplomacy and chicanery. If Assyria threatened, then ally with Egypt, Assyria's foe. Meet power with power, sword with sword. The international chess game of the balance of power is an old one. The European nations had ancient models. But alliances never averted wars. They merely postponed them and frequently the allies were later at each other's throats.

Isaiah had no confidence in material power. He was not a diplomat seeking temporary advantage. He was a prophet anxious to lead his people to the highest spiritual levels. Victories of the spirit he sought—not of the sword. He was not a shrewd statesman who through craft and bargaining sought to buttress the safety of his people. He saw through and beyond statecraft. He wanted his people not to put their

trust in chariots and armaments. He wanted his people to learn to put their trust in the Rock of Ages. Not transient victory but eternal triumph—not ease of body but ease of soul sought he for them. No wonder that he was scorned and jeered. How could a people drilled mentally in the philosophy of force understand this pacifist dreamer? He spoke a new language. Put your faith in God, not in the sword! Who had ever heard of a god who did not win by the sword? The kings of Judah and their subjects closed their ears to the spiritual advice of the prophet. Let visionaries place their faith in God, realists will place theirs in alliances. Let Utopian dreamers counsel the abolition of armaments, they, practical men, will be prepared to meet blow with blow. Isaiah's words were ignored. Judah became enmeshed in international intrigues, and in its forges the swords were tempered. And the enemy came and laid low her cities.

Was our generation any more spiritual or farseeing than that of Isaiah? We, too, put our trust in alliances and armaments. We, too, were drawn into war to fight for the liberties of the world, to establish democracy, to crush militar-

ism to usher in the golden age visioned by Isaiah. His vision appealed but his message escaped us. Isaiah knew that the Kingdom of God cannot be ushered in at the point of the bayonet, that with poison gases you cannot establish righteousness, and that the corner stone of the temple of humanity cannot rest upon the millions of corpses, victims of a world war. Evil begets evil. Violence breeds violence. Hate breeds hate. Injustice generates injustice. We believed that through force and bloodshed we could usher in an era of peace and righteousness. We believed that God works through Big Berthas and bombing planes.

And we have been rudely awakened. At a bitter cost, our generation has learned the wisdom of Isaiah's folly. He counseled trust in God. We practiced trust in brute force. The result is a chaotic world, militarism ascendant, democracy discredited, nations rattling their sabres, peoples bankrupt, hatred dominant, and destruction imminent. The very treaty of peace —the Treaty of Versailles, baptized in blood, conceived in iniquity, signed by avarice— brought no peace. Its makers cast into the scrap-basket the ideals which caused their peoples to

offer their sons and their means. They put their trust not in God, but in territories, in reparations. The result is world anarchy. That treaty has been revised and revised and it will continue to be revised until its last iniquitous clause is obliterated.

And yet we have learned little. Our faith is still in armies and in navies, in airplanes and in poison gases. The one man from India who speaks the language of Isaiah to our age is laughed at by the world and his philosophy is as ignored as were Isaiah's preachments.

Isaiah, too, warned the rulers of Judah that a revolution was as inevitable in Judah as it had been in Israel. Because many in our midst tremble for fear of a revolution, it is interesting to note to what Isaiah attributed the impending revolution: "It is ye that have eaten up the vineyard; the spoil of the poor is in your houses; what mean ye that ye crush My people, and grind the face of the poor?" (Isaiah 3:14, 15.) The vineyard was the nation victimized by selfish exploiters. The revolution is coming because the spoil of the poor is in your houses, because you have crushed the people and ground them down, warned the prophet.

Propagandists and agitators do not conjure up revolutions. They may set a match to the inflammable material. But revolutions are caused by social injustices, by maldistribution of wealth, by slums, by starvation, by exploitation. The French Revolution was not brought about by the political pamphleteers. When the people of France were starving, while royalty was hunting, when the yoke of feudalism proved too heavy to be borne, the masses rose and embraced the revolutionary philosophies. Not agitation but injustice is the fuel of revolution. In Russia, too, the revolution came, not because its people had been converted to a new economic point of view. The revolution came when czarism, corrupt and immoral, sent raw Russian lads to fight German machine guns with staves and spades, when Russian industry was demoralized. Then the day of reckoning of centuries of Romanoff rule came. Even then the Bolsheviks did not step in. Kerensky held power. He was driven out by the Bolsheviks because he insisted that prostrate Russia continue the war. The Bolsheviks gained power, not because their ideal proved acceptable but because all other Russian leaders had failed to give the masses food, cloth-

ing, fuel, and security. Revolutions come not through clandestine plotters but are bred by injustice and oppression.

If our national conscience is clear, if no social guilt stains our hands, if we have equitably administered our vast national wealth, if equality of opportunity prevails, if wealth and poverty do not live side by side, let us rest secure. If not, let us heed the words of the prophets and rectify the social iniquity before—before it is too late. Isaiah's warning may have modern implications.

Isaiah was no political philosopher. He believed that the era of righteousness and justice toward whose realization he had dedicated his life, could be established with the existing government, provided that the rulers and leaders of the people were men of integrity, and of idealism, and of character. It is not the mechanics of government that is all-important but the calibre of the men who preside over it. Democracies may become more tyrannical than despotisms. A benevolent tyrant like Mussolini or Lenin may do more to improve the lot of a people than a Harding, surrounded and led astray by selfish exploiters. If there is any lesson we

Americans can take to heart, it is Isaiah's vision of the ideal ruler. We are plagued by corrupt, self-seeking politicians as no nation in the history of the world has been. Grafters have been found not only in municipalities and in states, but even in the cabinet. Like parasitic germs, they have sapped the life-blood of the American peoples and because of their machinations democracy stands discredited.

Oh for rulers upon whom the spirit of the Lord will rest, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, who will judge the poor with righteousness and decide with equity for the meek of the land, who with the breath of their lips shall slay the wicked, and righteousness shall be the girdle of their loins, and faithfulness the girdle of their reins. Oh for rulers who will place righteousness above the passion for re-election and faithfulness to duty above pleasing the machine. Oh for rulers whose ears will be more attuned to the needs of the dispossessed and less attuned to those powerful interests whose campaign contributions are the sinews of elections.

America needs patriots of courage and of character who at sacrifices to themselves will

enter political life not to win office but to champion ideals and uphold principles, who will welcome defeat for a great cause. Shall it be said of our citizenry that it was ready to fight to make the world safe for democracy, but that it refused to fight to make democracy safe for the United States? We do not need new forms of government but we do need new types of politicians. In Cincinnati the charter government has succeeded in giving the people an honest and an efficient administration, whereas in Kansas City with a charter form of government the old gang holds power, and corruption is in the saddle, because in Cincinnati an aroused citizenship guards the temple of democracy while in the other city a powerful machine has cowed the voters. Isaiah hoped that in the future an ideal king would occupy Judah's throne and that he would bring the Kingdom of God in Judea. We know in America that as long as voters remain apathetic, as long as business leaders to secure personal advantages will support grafting officials, so long will we be denied decent, adequate government. The corrupt administration of public office in the United States is an indictment less of officeholders than of the American

people who elect and cheer them. When the spirit of righteousness will animate our citizens, then can we hope for the vindication of democracy in our land. "Zion will be redeemed by justice," said the prophet. So also America.

That Isaiah's interests were not merely national but embraced all of humanity is testified to by his immortal vision of a spiritually united humanity, preceded by the beating of swords into plowshares, spears into pruning-hooks and the abolition of war. The prophet knew that before an era of peace could be inaugurated, there must be a spiritual revolution among nations. How true we know that to be today! All disarmament conferences have failed and will fail until the philosophy of material force is supplanted by one of spiritual power, until men put their trust in God and not in armaments, in the good will of their neighbor and not in their own suspicions. First the spiritual regeneration of nations and then world peace will be possible.

When Isaiah received the summons to prophesy, after having perceived the holiness of God, he accepted it. He knew that the task of the prophet was arduous. Had he not heard of

Amos' experience? Did not Hosea repeat this experience when men said of him that "the prophet is a fool, the man of the spirit is mad"? Isaiah knew that his spiritual vision could not be understood by his contemporaries, that he would be a target of contempt and ridicule. Yet he assumed the task of failure. He had the courage to fail in life, to give up his place at court, that he might become a tribune of the people, a champion of the widow, of the orphan, of the stranger, of the underprivileged. He did fail, according to the judgment of his day. But at times, to fail in life is to succeed, and to succeed is to fail. The greatest men of history have been failures in their day. Socrates was; Jeremiah was; Savanarola was; Akiba was; Huss was; Jesus was. Isaiah had to be righteous, whether it brought him plaudits or abuse, popularity or ostracism. He was prepared to stand alone and fail in the sight of men, provided he succeeded in the sight of God. For had not God taught him that "the effect of righteousness is peace and the fruit of righteousness quietness and confidence forever"?

JEREMIAH

A Pessimistic Prophet of Faith and Hope

JEREMIAH

A Prophet of Faith and Hope

IN THE ritual of the synagogue there is a prayer recited thrice daily which the rabbis designated "the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven." The worshiper who utters it renews his allegiance to God and voluntarily assumes responsibility for making the Kingdom of God a reality in this world. Not all who took this oath of allegiance were conscious of its ethical implications. The yoke rested lightly on the shoulders of some of the children of Israel. But not so on the shoulders of the prophet Jeremiah. Spiritually delicate, the yoke of the Kingdom of God rested heavily upon his sensitive soul.

He loved his people deeply and tenderly, as tenderly as Hosea, as deeply as one who knew well its heroic traditions. His love brought him only agony of soul, for his people had gone astray after false gods and to the prophet their immediate future seemed ominous. The northern kingdom, Samaria, whence his family originated, was no more. Its sons had been carried into

captivity by the Assyrians almost a century ago, and the processes of history were at work assimilating them and thus removing them from the family of nations. Judah, like Israel, was flirting with annihilation. International chicanery, worship of Baal, blind loyalty to cult, oppression of the poor, characterized it.

To Jeremiah came the divine impulse to speak out, to shout from the housetops about the wrestlings of his spirit, about the inevitable disaster. How could he who loved his people pronounce their doom? How could he, a member of the ruling priestly caste, denounce his people? He would alienate his friends and family, forfeit his position, gain the ill-will of the court, invite its punishments, perhaps even death itself. Why should he court unpopularity, loneliness, perhaps even a felon's end?

Jeremiah, however, was a slave of his spiritual vision and not its master. "And if I say: 'I will not make mention of Him, nor speak any more in His name,' then there is in my heart as it were a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I weary myself to hold it in, but cannot." (Jer. 20:9.) A compelling fire in his heart moved him to speak in the face of danger and death.

He was but the tool of God, a lyre upon which the divine melodies were played by heavenly fingers. Jeremiah bore the yoke though it pressed him down. He had only one fear and that was that he would imperfectly articulate the message which suffused his whole being. Even when a fugitive from justice, he dictated his sermons to Baruch and had him communicate them to the court. Prophets speak because of inner compulsion. They are not soothsayers but moral teachers.

Jeremiah lived during soul-trying days. The Assyrian empire was pushing on to Egypt and the fate of Judah was sealed. Before the darkness of the Babylonian conquest was to envelop the little southern kingdom, there was to be a brilliant flare of light streaking like a meteor across its firmament, leaving a radiance undimmed even in our day. It was to demonstrate that prophetic utterances were not merely idle gestures, that their impassioned appeals were making impressions on human hearts.

In the year 621 B.C. the king, Josiah, dominated by the prophetic party, enacted a new law code, now known as the Deuteronomic Reformation. Scholars are agreed that that code is found

in the Book of Deuteronomy. Its insistence on the abolition of all local shrines and on the recognition that sacrifice may only be offered in the temple at Jerusalem was a triumph of the prophetic struggle against polytheism and Baal worship. The Baals were the gods of local shrines. By abolishing them a step toward the acceptance of monotheism by the people was made. The reformation of Josiah marks the first significant victory in the attempt to make monotheism the faith of the masses as it already was of the religious geniuses. That and the preachings of Jeremiah are the beacon-lights of the last days of Judah.

That Jeremiah approved the reformation of Josiah is accepted by most scholars. But why, then, did he in his famous temple-sermon (Jer., chap. 7) denounce the temple and cult? To understand Jeremiah's change of attitude, we must appreciate the genesis and growth of religious organizations. A great religion is born in the mind and soul of a spiritual genius and prophet. His vision attracts disciples. Anxious to perpetuate it, these disciples organize and build institutions and make rules to govern them. At times they build so well that they

lose the vision which inspired their building. Their energies become concentrated on the structure and the dream is lost. Their loyalties become attached to machinery, numbers, cult—to all except the ideal of their prophet.

That degeneration is reflected in all religious groups. Judaism born in the soul of the literary prophets (prior to the prophets, there was no Judaism, the religion of the ancient Hebrew may be classified as Semitism) inspired many followers. To protect it they developed ritual and laws, machinery and technique, and the prophetic hope was lost while the machinery remained. Christianity too was born in the mind of a prophet, or rather it was prophetic Judaism reborn in the soul of a successor of the prophets. Like them, Jesus rebelled against the established religion, denounced the spiritually empty ritual, pleaded for the poor and for the humble. His personality and his words attracted disciples. They organized to preserve his message for posterity. For a generation or so his dream lived. Then came theologians and ritualists. The humble carpenter of Nazareth had lieutenants garbed in purple and ermine, surrounded by pomp and splendor and escorted by armed

guards. Out of his protest against cult has grown the best organized cult in the world. The institutions dedicated to him live, but does his spirit of humility, of love, of justice and of fellowship live in them? The priests, the successors of the prophets, the practical men who tried to put the vision of the prophet over, became enmeshed in their practical endeavors, lost the vision and became slaves of the institution.

How true that is of innumerable modern religious organizations. The energies of their leaders so frequently are concentrated on machinery, on technique, on organization. Their main concerns are with mortgages, with budgets, with numbers of religious school pupils, of worshipers. They are compelled to be "go-getters," building up the business of the church. They merge for business reasons. A thriving church or synagogue (and they are equally guilty) is one with overflowing coffers, with big crowds, with big auxiliaries, with big everything. Bigger and better must their institution become daily. Just recently a neighbor of mine, a humble scholar, yet a man of fearless courage whose sermons were literary gems filled with a dynamic Christian message, was permitted to

resign from a large metropolitan church, not because he lacked ability, not because he had no spiritual message, but because a few rich contributors were alienated by his bold and forthright discussion of vital public issues, and because he performed no stunts and attracted no masses. That he stood for genuine religion, that he spiritualized the institution over which he presided, that he exemplified some of the ideals of the prophet of his church, these factors were given no consideration. Most of our religious organizations exist to perpetuate themselves. I was once bluntly told by a trustee that the rich support my temple and that I must cater to them. Catering to the rich! Is that the business of one who stands in the place of the prophets, the heir of Isaiah, of Jeremiah, of Jesus?

Sometimes as I look at church, synagogue, and cathedral, as I behold the snobbishness that prevails in them, the class lines that are drawn in them, and the color line too, as I see their leaders, lay and spiritual, put all stress on the business technique and organization, I am aghast, not at the apathy in religion but at the masses who are still interested and who supinely

tolerate this degeneration. Where is the love, the humility, the altruism, the fellowship of the dreamers of Western religions? Can these organizations yet be saved for religion, for God's work, or are they doomed? Think of the competition between church and church, the rivalry between denomination and denomination, the hostility between sect and sect, yes, the hate in the name of a God of love, and you are tempted to pronounce the doom of organized religion as did the prophet Jeremiah, and you see how applicable to us in organized religion is his temple-sermon: "Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, are these. For if ye thoroughly amend your ways and your doings, if ye thoroughly execute judgment between a man and his neighbor, if ye oppress not the stranger, the fatherless and the widow, and shed not innocent blood in this place, neither walk after other gods to your hurt; then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers, for ever and ever. Behold, ye trust in lying words, that cannot profit. Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and

walk after other gods whom ye know not; and come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, We are delivered to do all these abominations? Is this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes? Behold, even I have seen it, saith the Lord. But go ye now unto my place which was in Shiloh, where I set my name at the first, and see what I did to it for the wickedness of my people Israel. And now, because ye have done all these works, saith the Lord, and I spake unto you, rising up early and speaking, but ye heard not, and I called you, but ye answered not: Therefore will I do unto this house which is called by my name, wherein ye trust, and unto the place which I gave to you and to your fathers, as I have done to Shiloh. And I will cast you out of my sight, as I have cast out all your brethren, even the whole seed of Ephraim." Do we not deserve to be cast out?

Jeremiah saw clearly that the reformation of Josiah was legal and not spiritual. The law of the country (and religion and country were synonymous) had been changed but the spirit of the people had not. The love and affection they

had had for their local deities they transferred to the Yahveh who presided at the sanctuary in Jerusalem. They did not conceive him to be different from these other deities. He required sacrifice and punctilious observance of the cult as did the Baals. His name was different but his character was the same. That he desired righteousness and justice above fat rams, that his choicest sacrifice was a broken and a contrite heart, that he desired *punctiliousness* in the regard for the rights of human beings, that he desired protection for the widow, for the orphan, for the stranger and for the poor, that he loved truth and knowledge, that loyalty to these were all-important in his sight, that, the Yahveh worshipers in Josiah's time did not apprehend. They were monotheists, but not yet ethical monotheists. And hence Jeremiah's disappointment at the half-result accomplished by the Deuteronomic Reformation.

He expressed his disappointment publicly, within the sacred portals of the temple itself before worshiping thousands; before the professional prophets and priests; before the king and his courtiers. His immortal temple-sermon, already quoted in part, was treason and blasphemy

to his contemporaries; treason, because it tore to tatters the constitution of the ecclesiastical state; blasphemy because it scorned the holy of holies. Jeremiah in his divine folly and madness had sinned against God and king; against temple and country. He had shocked the religious sensibilities of a religious nation and had openly expressed his contempt for the nation's sacred law. With one fell sermon he had torn their constitution to tatters. How rude he was! How undiplomatic! How he must have loved the sensational! How he must have been seeking the limelight!

Are not these words familiar, too familiar? Are they not applied today to courageous statesmen, to Norris, to Borah, to prophetic religious leaders, to Holmes and to Wise, to Fosdick and to Ryan? If these men had been tactful, sensitive to the amenities and proprieties, they would never have blazed new religious and social trails. If Jeremiah had been tactful, his prophecies would have perished in his mind. Tact is a shield behind which cowards can conveniently hide. Young preachers are urged to be tactful. Their advisers think in terms of institutions, not in terms of the ethical essence of religion. Let

young preachers be prophetic. Let the craven and the panders have a monopoly on tact.

Jeremiah had seen the vision of his prophetic predecessors obscured in the cult created to maintain that vision. He attacked the cult and rearticulated the dream. Thus has priest always followed prophet, and prophet priest in the history of religions. But priests are not unnecessary, nor are cults and rites. Amos and Isaiah, like Jeremiah, had condemned the external observances of religion. God does not want sabbaths and new moons, rivers of oil and fat rams. God wants justice and righteousness and the protection of the weak and of the underprivileged.

With the prophets I agree. God neither wants nor needs ritual, praise, or sacrifice. But *man* needs and wants ritual, ceremonies, praise and thanksgiving to God. The people thought that by fulfilling religious rites they were pleasing their God. We know that they were pleasing themselves. Why is it that every religion which arose in protest against a cult eventually developed cult and ritual? That was so in the history of Judaism, also in Christianity, also in dissenting Protestantism. Is it because there

was degeneration in these religions? Is it because man is tainted? Rather, because man being what he is needs ritual, needs symbols of the ideals of his faith. Man being what he is responds to the aesthetic and to the dramatic, to the color of pageantry and to the melodies of choirs. A generation living near a prophet is carried away on a great wave of enthusiasm. The contact with the prophet is a source of continuous inspiration. The prophet himself is a ceremony. He symbolizes the ideal for his generation. Subsequently after the great wave of enthusiasm has ebbed, the masses of men need tangible, concrete, regular reminders of the ideals for which the prophet was voice. The problems of everyday living do not permit to the average man the luxury of continuous enthusiasms. His nervous system could not stand the strain. He is concerned with the struggle for existence. He must provide food, shelter, and clothing, education for his family. This has never been an easy task. It has taxed man's energies and ingenuities throughout the ages. These material demands must be met. So engrossed can man become in this challenge that the idealism of his soul may be submerged in

the round of daily duties. Here is where a fixed and regular cult can function. It can help that man by regular observances to remember the ultimates, the ideals of existence.

Ceremonies are made by man for man, made by him to serve as symbols of the unquenchable hope of the human race and faith in its destiny. Ceremonies can be abused. Habitual observances may tend to diminish their appeal and to conceal the principles they embody. Men may begin to believe that God desires ceremonies and only ceremonies. That danger is ever present, and to hurdle it, prophets are necessary. But every religion that has abolished all ceremonies has been in the long run impoverished thereby. The dissenting Protestant churches in the United States, breaking away from the Episcopal church, banned all art, all ritual, all beauty from their worship. Prayers were to be spontaneous, as were hymns, etc. The result has been that the members of these churches, starved for ritual and for pageantry, have swelled the ranks of lodges and organizations which have given them regalia and processions. From the ranks of these, Masons, Knights of Pythias, and the Ku Klux Klan have recruited their largest

numbers. In all these churches there is felt a hunger for ritual, for the dramatization of life's highest values. Reform Judaism in this country followed in the wake of the evangelical churches and abolished ritual and ceremonies to emphasize the ideal. The result has been that frequently when the ceremony was discarded the ideal, ephemeral, almost ghostlike, went as well. In the synagogue today there is evident a revival of ceremonies which can articulate or express in poetry and art the great ideals of man. The ideal religion would be one in which a beautiful ritual continuously kept alive the highest principles. Is such a religion possible? Must a religion which is aesthetically satisfying dull the ethical passion? Should religion soothe or challenge? Can it fulfill both functions—make for personal contentedness and divine discontent?

Jeremiah needed no external religion. His being was permeated with the consciousness of God. His communion with him was so direct, so vital, so real, that perhaps he assumed that all men are capable of similar experiences. He needed no temple, no sacrificial cult, no land to make him aware of the existence of God. To

the first captives carried into Babylonia he wrote a letter urging them to purify themselves spiritually—God could be worshiped in Babylon as well as in Judah, without a temple, without a priesthood, without any mediator. "And ye shall call upon Me, and go, and pray unto Me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek Me, and find Me, when ye shall search for Me with all your heart. And I will be found of you, saith the Lord." (Jer. 29:12-14.) Here we have Jeremiah's statement of his faith, of his God, who can be found with the human heart properly attuned, without any external assistance. Thus did the prophet spiritualize the religion of his fathers and make a notable contribution to the development of Judaism and world religion.

In Jeremiah's prophecies we also perceive the union of ethics and religion. From his consciousness of God flows his ethical ardor. Having sensed the nature of the divine, Jeremiah realized that the ethical life is God's choicest praise. His repeated communion with God gave him the courage to continue in what seemed a hopeless mission. The urge to plead the cause of the dispossessed came from his faith in God. His neighbors, worshiping false gods,

lacked the vision and the impulse toward justice and righteousness. Wrongdoing alienates man from God, and righteous living brings man into closer fellowship with him.

Was Jeremiah a pessimist? He was distracted by the fate toward which his people were madly plunging. He saw that their doom was sealed. He loved them and his spirit groaned and was in travail. For heeding the voice of God he was imprisoned, put in stocks, flogged, even sentenced to death. His ardor did not weaken nor his courage falter. In the guardhouse he reiterated the spiritual message which brought him there. Before the king and his priests he denounced their religion and their laws. Unlike our Supreme Court he declared that God came before king, priest, and country. Despite his defeats, despite his persecution, despite his suffering, despite his frequent humiliations, he was not a pessimist. He had great hopes for the future, hopes for the spiritual regeneration of Israel; hopes for the spiritual regeneration of mankind. He had faith in man because he had faith in God. Our modern intellectuals are flirting with pessimistic philosophies. They began by denying God and ended

by denying man. Pessimism is, as William James pointed out, a religious disease.

Jeremiah was not free from doubts. In his confessions he did not hesitate to express his belief that God had deceived him. Jeremiah's faith was not a tradition taught by priest or handed down by the past. Jeremiah's faith was the fruit of the struggle of his spirit. He doubted, he disbelieved, and out of the travail of his soul his faith was born. So many today receive their faith from their fathers, or else are taught theological creeds which they memorize. Faith cannot be taught. It must be experienced. It is an unseen fire kindled in the heart of man. It is born out of doubt, out of self-searching, and out of communion. It is the fruit of religious questing. Doubt is a step in the process, a rung in the ladder to faith. It is better to doubt old creeds than passively to accept them. Many who assent to creeds are not religious. Religion is an experience. It is the soul meeting, seeing, speaking with God. The apathy to religion may be due to the fact that people have sought God at the end of formula and creed, instead of in their own experiences. Jeremiah experienced God. He sought fellowship

with Him, and from that fellowship, born out of struggle and doubt, came the faith which gave him the courage to carry out his mission; to proclaim an ethical and spiritual religion; to stand alone, unmoved, like Gibraltar, in a generation of waywardness and of idolatry. Over the din and the tumult he saw his God and knew that a glorious destiny awaited his people and all humanity.

THE SECOND ISAIAH

The Prophet of Purified Nationalism

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IN ANCIENT days one easy way whereby an author could make his book a best seller was to ascribe it to a beloved or popular figure of the past. Budding poets with a genius and talent in Israel, hesitated to publish their works in their own names. They would select the greatest personages in the history of their people and under their names issue their poems or books. Thus it is that to Moses, to David, to Solomon, and to Isaiah, were attributed monumental literary achievements of which they themselves had no knowledge. The advantage to a writer of resorting to a pseudonym was that through his illustrious predecessor he won for his work an immediate audience. David is believed to be the author of the Psalms, many of which were written in the Maccabean period, many centuries after his death, and to Solomon was accredited the wisdom of Proverbs, which is the product of the mingling of the streams of culture from Hellas and Judaea.

During the Babylonian exile, there appeared among the captives, a prophet whose spiritual stature was unexcelled, whose name will for-

ever remain unknown because his prophecies have been preserved under the name of his illustrious predecessor, Isaiah. That Isaiah could not have written chapters forty to fifty-five is easily apparent. Isaiah lived at the end of the eighth century. In the above-mentioned chapters, events are described which occurred more than a century after his ministry. Isaiah lived when the Assyrian Empire was rising to power. The historical background of chapters forty to fifty-five of the Book of Isaiah alludes to the rise of the Persian Empire. In Isaiah's lifetime the northern kingdom existed and the heirs of David sat on Judah's throne. In the works of the Isaiah of the Exile, Samaria is no more and the Judaean monarchy is destroyed. Though Isaiah the first, had had a very unhappy life and had received little support from his people in his lifetime, after the passage of a century his greatness was appreciated and his niche in history secure. The unknown prophet of the exile or his disciples hoped to win a hearing for his prophecies and insure their preservation by attributing them to Isaiah.

From his prophetic predecessors the Second Isaiah inherited the belief that God manifests

himself in the history of nations. In the growing power of Cyrus the Great and in the victorious sweep of his armies, the prophet of the Exile saw the hand of God. Israel's period of suffering was over and the figure of her redeemer was on the horizon. That, to his mind, that redeemer was Cyrus, a Persian, not a descendant of the Davidic family, is indicative of the breadth of his views and the universality of his religion. Not so was the case with the masses of the exiles to whom he addressed himself. To the imagination of exiles the fatherland always seems most precious and their love for it becomes most intense. The most loyal Britishers today are the descendants of American Tories who live in Canada. How frequently have we not heard immigrants who fled from Russia to escape from poverty and tyranny, speak in glowing terms of the land of their birth! With old men the golden age is always in the past, and the most precious memories those of childhood and of innocence. The Jewish exiles in Babylon, though their condition improved materially, still clung to their nationalistic faith and longed to return to the land of their fathers that there they might wor-

ship freely. Though Jeremiah had taught that religion was dependent neither on land, nor on temple, nor on cult, that it was inward, the relation of each individual to his God, they had either not understood him or else had been unable to emancipate themselves from their old beliefs. Jeremiah had written to them urging them to purify themselves in Babylonia and to write God's law in their hearts. Some heeded his advice, for the synagogue was born in the captivity. But others shared the view of the poet who exquisitely phrased their nostalgia for their home and for their God who could only be worshiped in Jerusalem:

By the rivers of Babylon,
There we sat down, yea, we wept,
When we remembered Zion.

. . . . . .

And our tormentors asked of us mirth,
"Sing us one of the songs of Zion."
How shall we sing the Lord's song
In a foreign land?
If I forget thee, O Jerusalem,
Let my right hand forget her cunning.

—Psalm 137.

For Isaiah of the Exile, God was emancipated from land, from people, from cult. He was the God of the universe who rules all nations in justice and righteousness. For him and for some of his followers the Exile had served to destroy every vestige of the tribal religion of Semitism, the legacy of the past and the heritage from desert nomads. For in Babylon some of the exiles created a liturgical literature, founded the synagogue, established organized worship without a priesthood, without altars, without sacrifice. The synagogue, the mother of church, of cathedral, and of mosque, was made possible as the exiles realized that even in Babylon Yahveh could be worshiped, for he was the God of the universe. This prophetic genius had long proclaimed but the people learned it from their own spiritual gropings and experiences. The new religion was not taught to them. They caught its meaning from their own lives.

The Second Isaiah began to comfort his people and to herald the advent of the Persian redeemer and to proclaim the end of their suffering in these immortal words, read to this day in the synagogue on the Sabbath following the anniversary of the destruction of the temple by

Babylonians and Romans: "Comfort ye, comfort ye, My people, saith your God. Bid Jerusalem take heart, and proclaim unto her, that her time of service is accomplished, that her guilt is paid off; that she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." (Isa. 40:1, 2.)

But the people, skeptical, refused to believe. They pointed out to the prophet the mighty power of the far-flung Babylonian Empire, its wealth and prosperity, and could not imagine that it could be laid low by the Persian upstart. To which the prophet replied: "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; but the word of our God shall stand forever." Empires will crumble. Beauty will fade. Power will diminish. But the divine judgment cannot be denied. It endures forever. Mighty peoples are but as grasshoppers in the sight of God, pomp and splendor as nothing. The redemption of Israel, of humanity, is inevitable—no human power, no human force can avert it.

Like the gentle Hosea, Deutero-Isaiah was aware of God's love for his children. What of it if they have been sinful! Can a mother forget the children to whom she gave suck? How then can God forget his children? The suffer-

ing of Israel, in the eyes of the prophet, was not punishment for its sins but rather necessary purification to prepare it for its world mission. "Behold, I have refined thee, but not as silver; I have tried thee in the furnace of affliction." (Isa. 48:10.) Even as a finely tempered sword must be tempered in the fires of the furnace and beneath the hammer-blows of the smith, so the people of Israel to become the spiritual sword of Yahveh to cut the peoples of the world from idolatry and from social injustice, must be steeled and tempered in suffering and converted to its own mission.

When the prophet sensed in Israel's suffering the divine plan, he was uttering an eternal truth. All suffering man cannot explain or understand. Why the innocent suffer in a world we believe to be dominated by justice and righteousness remains unanswerable! Why the earthquake took a heavy toll of life in Japan is inexplicable! Why the seemingly useless inherit strong bodies and the public-spirited weak ones, is part of the mystery of life! To live is to suffer. Pain is the warp of the fabric of life. No one escapes it. Born in travail and agony, crying out at the first moment of consciousness,

destined to grow and to decay, to become strong and to grow feeble, to make friends and to lose them, to weave the bonds of affection and to sever them at death, that is the destiny of man. To ignore that is folly. To recognize it is wisdom. Life is part pain. Pleasure is known as a reaction to pain.

Nations, being but aggregates of human beings, suffer the same lot. We must distinguish, however, between the pain that is essential to life, that is a condition to it, and the pain that men endure unnecessarily from their fellow-beings. Slums, poverty, war, unemployment, inflict pain. Such pain is not cosmic. It is not of the "must" of life. It is imposed by man, man-made. It can be avoided. It is an evidence of social injustice, of lack of spiritual sensitiveness and of moral will on the part of people. Our national suffering at the present time is man-made. If our land were victimized by famine or by drought or by plague, we could comparatively easily adjust ourselves to it by saying, "It is God's way. His will be done." But that cannot be said in the present emergency in that sense. It is man who is responsible for the calamity that envelops us. Society has

sinned and erred. The emphasis on success for self, if need be, at the expense of the community, the *laissez faire* policy of extreme individualism, has brought our nation to the brink of the abyss.

Perhaps it is God's will. Perhaps this crisis is a way that God has of warning us that our immoral and unjust social policies, our corrupt politics, our brazen defense of a philosophy of selfishness, is bound to lead us to ruin and may frustrate our experiment in democracy. This depression, an excrescence on our national life, is a symptom of a social disease which grips us and challenges us to look beyond the symptoms, to the violation of the moral laws of justice and of righteousness in economics which caused them. If this suffering will cause America to look within, to ferret out the roots of its maladjustment, to stamp them out, then it will not have been in vain. Like Judah of old we shall emerge after being purified of selfishness and avarice in the crucible of pain and agony.

To the prophet of the Exile, the problems of Israel's special relation to God and his universality, his love for and his interest in all peoples, demanded solution. Here he was speak-

ing to a people who like the other peoples of antiquity had been nourished on the thesis that Yahveh was only their God and that they were his special wards. Even when Yahveh demanded social justice in place of incense, he demanded it for his people, for his land, for his kingdom alone. It was difficult for them to abandon their national loyalties. The first Isaiah had met the issue by stating that the spiritual regeneration of Israel was to be the signal for the spiritual regeneration of humanity. The second Isaiah met it by boldly forging a new spiritual concept, by spiritualizing nationalism, when he created the thesis for which he is best remembered, that his people was to be the servant of the Lord; that God had chosen it, not for might, not for conquest, not for prosperity, but for a mission which would bring it suffering and scorn and ostracism (and it did). His people was to become the servant of humanity, and minister to its needs. It was to be "a kingdom of priests and a holy people" ministering to the welfare of the human race. What a bold suggestion! What a spiritual revelation! What a glorious interpretation and justification for nationalism!

The prophet did not meet his problem as would many superficial modernists by deciding that nationalism was bad and that nationalism must go. Nationalism is not bad, but selfish nationalism is bad. National loyalties are not evil unless they take precedence over spiritual loyalties, unless they compel conscientious objectors to shed human life. What Isaiah did was to fuse the spiritual and the national loyalties. He made the highest goal of the nation the Kingdom of God. Disloyalty to that meant treason to his people. Isaiah took the natural love of a people for their tradition and linked it with the universal aims of God. He made the supreme aims of a nation not self-aggrandizement, not exploitation, not wealth, not power, but the spiritual regeneration of all mankind. When he described the suffering servant in immortal words, he had in mind his people, a small minority clamoring for the spiritual in a world of materialism, pleading for peace in a world preparing for war, insisting on social justice in a world predicated on selfishness.

"Who would have believed our report? And to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? For he shot up right forth as a sapling,

and as a root out of a dry ground; he had no form nor comeliness, that we should look upon him, nor beauty that we should delight in him. He was despised, and forsaken of men, a man of pains, and acquainted with disease, and as one from whom men hide their face: he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely our diseases he did bear, and our pains he carried; whereas we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded because of our transgressions, he was crushed because of our iniquities: the chastisement of our welfare was upon him, and with his stripes we were healed." (Isa. 53:1-5.)

Where today is there a nation whose supreme goal is the welfare of humanity? There was a time in American history, a glorious time, when to our shores we were happy to welcome the downtrodden and the oppressed, when our people were imbued with a desire to serve humanity, to spread the blessings of liberty and of democracy. Then America meant hope to millions of human beings writhing in the talons of European tyranny. No matter what they suffered, they dreamt of redemption when they would see the outlines of the Statue of Liberty

and share in the building of the American nation. That time has passed. Nationalism has usurped universalism. The Melting Pot was our glory of which we boasted. Now we hasten to conceal it with other family skeletons. Once we proclaimed proudly that all nations and all races were part of us. Today we blame all of our evils on the humble people who did the menial work for our country. All guilt for our weakness is put upon the foreigners. Lincoln Steffens, in his great autobiography, demonstrated that political corruption is as venal in old American centers as in new and that back-bay Boston may be as corrupt as Tammany Hall, and the Senate banking investigation seems to have affirmed that.

The universalism of America has yielded to a selfish nationalism. "America first" has become a widely accepted slogan. If it meant America first in world service, it would be splendid. But it means America first for its own selfish interests. What kept us out of the League of Nations? What has delayed our membership in the World Court? What has dictated our national attitude toward world debts? What is behind our outrageous tariff policy? Selfish

nationalism. What is behind our immigration policy but an indifference to the welfare of humanity? Senator Borah recently appealed to the nation for a saner attitude toward debt revision purely on self-interest, because such cancellation would help our farmers and help return prosperity. Senator Borah is more spiritual than this appeal indicates but he feared to use a more idealistic argument. To such depths have our national morals sunk. What a nation of hypocrites we have become! We call the Bible the Book of books. We place it in every hotel room. Some of us fight for its reading and teaching in the public schools. Some go to church and love and worship Jesus. A few states have Sunday blue laws to foster church-going. And with all this piety and religiosity, we doom a race, because its skin is black, to be drawers of water and hewers of wood, while we prate of human brotherhood and fellowship. We worship at the shrine of a universal God and are becoming a nation of rabid nationalists. Selfishness dominates our foreign policy. In our last election campaign two presidential candidates dodged and evaded international issues because they feared that evidence of international

sympathies and love for humanity would alienate voters.

Would that an Isaiah might arise to sound in our ears the hallowed concept of the servant of the Lord. Yes, would that this nation become a Christian country, Christian not in the theological sense, but Christian as Jesus was Christian. Yes, I a rabbi, would work to Christianize America in that sense. It would be merely applying the teaching of the great prophets to my country.

Oh, for the understanding of this purified nationalism! People of America, awake from your stupor! The Japanese, Chinese, Russians, Negroes, Mexicans, are children of the one Father, and one God has created them. You cannot remain indifferent to their welfare. A happy America in a world of suffering is spiritually inconceivable. The dungeons which imprison humanity must be opened. The human prisoners must be set free. Babes are divine in China and in Russia, even as in our cities. Their lives are sacred. Their welfare must be our concern. Blessed with national resources, with capital, with equipment, with infinite possibilities for emancipating man from the drudgery

of toil and insecurity, will our country use its bounty for self-aggrandizement or as a servant of the Lord for all his children?

What makes a nation great? Not its hills, nor its valleys; not its mines nor its fields; not its oil wells nor its prairies; not its railroads nor its factories! Most of these are gifts of God. A nation is great when its spirit is attuned to the welfare of all humanity. A nation is great when it regards its wealth as a stewardship of God and administers it as generously as God has provided it. People of America, will you sink into selfish moral corruption or will you rise to become the servant of God? Will you say in the words of the second Isaiah: "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye for water, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? And your gain for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto Me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness." (Isa. 55: 1, 2.) Will you make loyalty to America synonymous with loyalty to God?

THE ANONYMOUS PROPHET

Who Through the Parable of Jonah Speaks an Immortal Truth

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THERE have been times when a sideshow was so successful that it became the circus. This is true of the Book of Jonah. The whale's swallowing of Jonah, intended by the unknown author to be an incident in the preaching of a great message, has become for many the Book of Jonah. That the whale swallowed Jonah is believed by multitudes. The whale did more than that. He swallowed the moral of the Book of Jonah. Its author endeavored to sum up, in a tale, the spiritual teachings of the prophets. His readers loved the story, his sideshow, so much that they have ignored his circus, his unexcelled vision. If a fraction of the energy still expended in some theological circles to establish the historicity of the Jonah narrative would be utilized toward realizing its lofty philosophy, what a finer world would result. The Jonah parable was but a vehicle for a great spiritual truth. Multitudes are concerned but with the vehicle while its truth slumbers.

The prophet of the Exile, the second Isaiah, had tried to induce his people to accept a world mission. This mission was not to bring glory or power, but suffering and perhaps disgrace. It was to be assumed humbly and not arrogantly. It was to be the service of God, by testifying to his desire for social justice, world peace, and spiritual values. But the prophet, of course, was a visionary. When the Babylonian captivity was over and some exiles returned from Babylon to share in the rebuilding of Jerusalem, they had no time for Utopian dreamers. Practical men were needed, priests and not prophets. Practical measures had to be taken to save the people from the fate which had overtaken Samaria. Ideals had their place, but the time demanded that ideals be scrapped temporarily. What familiar language! Men have always lacked the courage to give ideals a chance. They have always catered to the lowest phases of human nature. They have feared to put their trust in the highest, in spiritual values, in God. So the priestly leaders like Ezra and Nehemiah forbade intermarriage, established Sabbath observance, developed a ritual, attempted to separate the Jews from other peoples, took

practical steps to insure the Jew's survival in a world where defeated peoples have invariably disappeared. The loyalties of the people became attached to national survival—and the prophetic ideals which gave the people distinction, which made them of historic significance, were not merely forgotten but frequently violated. A premium was placed on conformity to cult. Separatism displaced universalism. The people felt themselves chosen of God. That choice was not a challenge to service as Isaiah interpreted it, but a privilege which assured eventual national prosperity. With this intense nationalism came a feeling of superiority to other peoples, always a product of chauvinism. The author of the Book of Jonah by his beautiful tale challenged the narrow nationalism which was destroying the spiritual fibre of his people, summed up the universal teachings of the prophets and again pleaded that the narrow, arrogant nationalism be supplanted by the consecration to human service and by the recognition that the love of God is extended to all peoples, even to Babylonians, their most hated foes, who had destroyed their kingdom. What a textbook for the schools of the Nazis! As a

disciple of the great prophets, Jonah restated their teachings to his generation.

Have these teachings penetrated the thinking of modern nations? True, they are glibly, rhetorically accepted. True, civilized nations pay lip-homage to them. Alas, they have not penetrated the lives and not even the thinking of modern peoples. The logical corollary of the belief in monotheism, in one God, is the belief in one humanity, known popularly as the brotherhood of man. If there is but one God, then all nations, all races are his children. If that God is a God of love, then his love is extended to all races and all nations.

What is meant by the love of God? Is it merely pious sentimentality? Hosea's understanding of the love of God was that God saw spiritual beauty even in a prostitute, a social outcast. His teaching carried to its logical conclusion will compel a complete revision of our criminal code, our attitude toward crime and our treatment of lawbreakers. No longer can we walk arrogantly about and say that we are good people and they, the criminals, are bad people. For it is the sins of the good people which are responsible for the crimes of bad peo-

ple. Just as the prophet Hosea bids us drop all superior airs toward our neighbors; so the author of the Book of Jonah bids us drop all superior airs to nations and to races.

It is true that most of us believe in superior and inferior nations, in superior and inferior races. It is true that most of us with unashamed brazenness have decided that our nation, our race, our clan, our church, is the best and that others are inferior. By best we mean the best materially, intellectually, spiritually. Not only do we look down with ungodlike arrogance upon other nations and peoples, but from the Olympian heights of our imagination, we assert boldly that never can these other peoples scale them. Thus we justify imperialism, exploitation, tyranny. The yellow races, our inferiors, are not fit to rule. The Philippines, inferiors, must prove their right to independence. The Chinese, inferiors, may be exploited, their cities raped, their liberties trampled upon. Thus we justify our shameful treatment of the Negro, compelling him to do our scavenger work, giving him few opportunities, an inadequate environment, and then saying he is our inferior. If God is a God of love, and his divine spirit

burns within the breast of black as well as of white, of Asiatic as well as of European, then it cannot be that our assumptions of racial and national superiority are spiritually sanctioned. No God of love would doom a race to servitude as the Negro race in America is doomed. No God of love would doom four hundred millions of Chinese to continued exploitation. The God of love must have equipped all peoples with potentialities of spiritual development.

The popular scientists whose views color the thinking of the masses negate the God of love when they speak of inferior and superior races. The average man believes that there are five major races, white, brown, red, yellow and black. The average white man assumes that the white man is the superior race. The white race has again been divided into Semitic and Aryan groups and each of these groups has voted itself superior and declared the other inferior. The European Aryans have been divided into Nordics, Alpines, and Latins, and again Nordics have declared themselves to be the superior race, the chosen people. *Vide* Hitler. In our country, the thesis of Nordic racial superiority has influenced immigration legislation and rumor

has it that in South America the theory of Latin racial superiority has affected their immigration laws.

If these popular assumptions are correct, then the prophetic writer of Jonah is in error and God's love is not extended to all peoples. For to doom peoples or races to servitude and to inferiority is an expression of hate and not of love. If there is such superiority, then human brotherhood is a bubble and world fellowship a mirage. Fellowship and brotherhood cannot exist between patrician and plebeian, between feudal lord and feudal serf, between master and slave, between superiors and inferiors. Brotherhood demands the same equality that exists between brothers, not necessarily equality in ability but social equality. If popular racial science is correct, then religion with its teaching of the love of God and the brotherhood of man is in error. Then Isaiah erred, then Jesus erred. Then religion has held up to man a beautiful hypothesis which the facts of life rudely dispel.

To challenge the smug popular racial science there has arisen a school of anthropologists under the leadership of Professor Franz Boas of Columbia University. These contend first that

there are no pure races, that all races are hopelessly mixed, that there are no pure Semites, no pure Aryans, no pure Nordics; that if any of these races originally possessed superiority, those who call themselves by their names cannot lay claim to that superiority. They contend, secondly, that it is unscientific to speak of superior and inferior races, but to be scientific, one must speak of advanced and backward races. There is vast significance in this difference of classification. An inferior race can never become a superior race. A backward race, by a change of environment, by a change of historic opportunity, may become an advanced race.

They prove both contentions. That there are no pure races, that all peoples represent an amalgam, is indisputable to any student of history. There is also no pure Jewish race. What with intermarriage and conversions, one cannot speak of a pure Jewish race. From the arsenal of history, the school of Boas proves that backward races become advanced, while advanced races deteriorate. Not too many centuries ago the Arabs were the temporary custodians of the culture of the West. From Bagdad to the Pillars of Hercules the flames of their civilization

flared. These Arabs developed the foundations of modern science, of medicine, of astronomy, and of mathematics. Arabic numerals still are in everyday use. The Arabs of Cordova, cultured, learned, patrons of poetry, of philosophy, must have looked with scorn upon the ancestors of modern European nations. They perhaps considered them inferior and regarded them as uncouth and illiterate. A few centuries have passed—a long interim, from the perspective of an individual life, but insignificant from the perspective of history, for "one thousand years are but as a day in the sight of the Lord." In these fleeting centuries races seemingly inferior to the Arabs have become the rulers of the world, and the descendants of the Arabs have become the backward peoples. To the civilized Canaanites, the nomadic Hebrew tribes who rudely invaded their land seemed backward. In a few centuries the backward Hebrews had produced immortal heroes and a literature the most distinguished in the story of the race. To the cultured Greeks, the conquering Romans seemed backward. And the wearers of the toga, as recorded in Caesar's *Gallic Wars*, looked with disdain and contempt upon the inhabitants

of Northern Europe, the ancestors of the haughty Nordics of our age, whom they regarded as barbarians and upon whose rights and liberties they trampled.

Thus it is that the backward races of one age become the advanced of the next. It is not altogether impossible that a despised tribe in the bush of Australia or in the jungle of Africa may be destined to grasp the torch of culture, when economic rivalries culminating in wars will lay low our civilization. Thus is the love of God withheld from no people and no race. Thus does no race have a monopoly on talent, on intellect, on spirituality. Thus does science dissipate the popular racial fallacies which are naught but expressions of arrogance and of vanity. Thus does anthropology vindicate the faith of the prophets, as expressed by the unknown author of Jonah, that the love of God has penetrated to all races and to all classes of men. Human brotherhood is not a comfortable illusion. It is a scientific reality.

What of Jonah's other teaching that the Jews are to assume a world mission of teaching ethical monotheism to the peoples of the world? In the Greek period of Jewish history, when the Book

of Jonah was probably written, there may have been a warrant for such a mission. Polytheism prevailed in theory as well as in fact. Then such a missionary movement could have been of value to society. That movement was subsequently undertaken by those Jews who, under the leadership of Paul, accepted Christianity. It has spread the ideals of the prophets, their conception of God, their ethical preachments, their emphasis on social justice to the four corners of the globe. The prophets have been translated into every known language and their way of life is known wherever men read and think. The mission which the author sought to impose on Jonah, a poetic name for Israel, has been accomplished through Christianity.

Even religions which do not bear the name Christian are yet enunciating ideals similar to those of the Hebrew prophets. Three new sciences indicate that clearly: the science of the history of religion, that of comparative religions, and that of the psychology of religions. From the history of religion, we learn that all modern religions, no matter how spiritual their outlook, are rooted in the primitive rites and superstitions of the past. All religions have be-

ginnings in animism, in totemism, in child and animal sacrifice, in magic and in shamanism. In many modern rites, their primitive origins are clearly evident. Slowly and gradually did man evolve to higher religious conceptions. In the story of the prophets, the evolution of the religion of the people of Israel from primitive Semitism to ethical monotheism is mirrored. That evolution was slow and gradual. A parallel evolution took place in other religions. Among Christian peoples, the process of religious evolution was hastened by contact with the literature of the Bible.

The science of comparative religions is largely possible because of the herculanean efforts of Max Müller, a German scholar, who translated the bibles of the Orient from the original language to German and thus revealed the religions of our Eastern neighbors to us. Studying these bibles of the Orient, we lose our religious superiority complexes. Confucius, five centuries before Rabbi Hillel and six before Jesus of Nazareth, enunciated the Golden Rule for the Chinese. Monotheism was propounded by Hindu philosophers. Ethical monotheism was the religion of Akhnaton, a great Egyptian ruler

who sought in vain to establish it in Egypt. Tendencies toward monotheism are found in Babylonian psalms and the religion of ethical monotheism was taught in the name of Zoroaster by ancient Persians and it is taught by the Parsees, their modern heirs. The God of love of Jonah did not limit his inspiration to one chosen people. To all peoples, in all lands, did he send his teachers, who revealed his ethical will. Not Judaism nor Christianity alone are witnesses to the love, to the unity, to the justice of God. But to many nations were these divine attributes revealed. Some called God Yahveh and some Buddha, some Brahma and some Allah. What matters it by what appellation God was known? Thus does comparative religion indicate religious unity.

The psychology of religion does likewise. The same needs and hungers, the same suffering and perplexities, the same bafflement before the mystery of life, the same hopes and aspirations, fears and reverences, lead Jews to the synagogue; Christians to church; Mohammedans to mosque; Buddhists to temple; Eskimos and Australian tribesmen to their idols. The need for religion is the same, though the ways of

satisfying it may vary intellectually. I realized that when I visited the Notre Dame Cathedral in Montreal. It is a bit of stone poetry, whose steeples rise skyward as if they were endeavoring to pierce the mysteries of heaven. I was awed by its beauty and majesty and a mood of religious exaltation seized me. Into the cathedral I marched and there I saw devout worshipers on their knees before the image of a saint. The spirit of exaltation departed from me. I ceased being the mystic, and I became the rationalist. I sniffed at this worship of images and in haughty religious arrogance I felt the superiority of my faith because it forbade the worship of idols. I marched on into the cathedral and before another saint's image, I saw a frail lad on his knees in prayer. He was deformed. It was the noon hour and his packed lunch lay near him. I stopped to watch that kneeling lad pray. I seemed to feel him reaching out through this saint to his God for courage to face life bravely though handicapped. The tears coursed down his cheeks and I noticed that mine, too, became moist.

I prayed and wept with that lad. He symbolized for me humanity, bended on its knees

in prayer, humanity throughout the ages, wearied, disconsolate, lonely, mystified, seeking and yearning for the fountain of strength and of hope, of fellowship and of truth. That lad symbolized for me bended Jews and Christians, Mohammedans and Buddhists, humble before God, seeking his staff. What matter it to God whether men seek him before the ark of the Synagogue, the crucifix of Christianity, the image of the Buddhist, or the crescent of the Mohammedan? What matter it to God whether men pray to him in Hebrew or Sanskrit, Latin or English? The stuff of religious experience is the same. Today our intellectual differences loom large in our imaginations. Tomorrow the religious students will classify our modern religions into one category, even as we speak of the religions of antiquity. To the ancients the differences between Iris and Zeus, Jupiter and Odin were large. To us seeing them from the perspective of history, the differences are pygmied. That, too, will be the fate of our religious differences in the judgment of history. Not only racially but religiously, has God shown his love for all men.

What are needed in our age are not men to teach religion but men to live religion. Any people, any sect, any nation, can gain the immortality that the ancient Hebrews have, for having discovered the ethical nature of God for the Western world, by having the courage and the character to live the teachings of the prophets of Israel and to translate their idealism into the warp and woof of our social order. Such missionaries have before them endless fields to conquer. The plan, the ideal held forth by the author of Jonah, lies before us! Where are the modern prophetic spirits bold enough, daring enough, to live his challenge and to pave the way for a united, emancipated humanity? Today cynics are saying that the story in the Book of Jonah is not so much the incident of Jonah's being swallowed by the whale. The fiction, they say, is the belief that there is a God of love and that that love excludes no people. To prove the reality of the Jonah-ideal, is the supreme challenge to everyone who has faith in God and who believes that there is a family of nations and that the brotherhood of man and the Kingdom of God are not merely Utopian visions.

JESUS

A Prophet of Israel and a Son of the Synagogue

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WHEN the modern Jew speaks of Jesus he does not have in mind a deified human being, nor does he have in mind the Jesus of Christian theology, the Jesus who guarantees salvation to all mankind, the Jesus whose death was an atonement for all humanity. This is the Christ of Christianity and the Christ of Christianity the Jew cannot accept. The modern Jew in his thinking is just as far from that conception, if not farther, than he was when Paul was preaching the Christian religion. When we speak of Jesus, we have in mind the humble Galilean carpenter whose personality inspired love and admiration among his followers, who taught a high standard of ethics, who spent his life amongst Jews, who toiled for his people, and who came to his death almost nineteen centuries ago. By Jesus we mean the Jesus who was born in the synagogue and who never left it; the Jesus who came to fulfill its laws, the Jesus who came to Jerusalem on the

eve of the Passover Festival to bring his offerings to the temple, as did other faithful and devout Jews; the Jesus who sat at the feet of rabbis, who learned from them the inimitable majesty of Jewish aspiration, the wide universalism of its teaching, the all-inclusiveness of its outlook, as well as the charm and poetry of its ritual. Truly Jesus lived as a Jew.

Even as Jesus lived as a Jew, so did he die as a Jew. His tragic death fits in perfectly with the historic Jewish conception of the messiah. The word messiah was initially applied to the kings of Israel. It means "anointed one." It was the duty of the ancient kings of Israel to save their people from their foes. Whenever Israel lived in exile or whenever tyrants cruelly oppressed them, the people hoped and prayed for a redeemer, or a messiah, who would restore their national independence and who would expel from Palestine the conqueror or the oppressor.

During the reign of the cruel and brutal Pontius Pilate in Jerusalem, the poverty-stricken masses of that city, suffering and groaning under his tyranny, were praying and hoping

that God would send them a redeemer who would liberate them from the Roman and his legions, and that a descendant of David would again sit on the throne of Israel, and make possible the renewed grandeur and glory of the kingdom of Judaea. On the Passover Festival, when the memories of Egyptian freedom were kindled in the minds of the Jews, the hope for the imminent coming of a messiah was in the minds of all. When Jesus, therefore, came to Jerusalem on the eve of the Passover Festival and when the reports of his noble character reached the ears of the Jewish masses, is it any wonder that many of them felt that the messiah had come and that the days of Roman rule were numbered? Very likely through his Jewish friends, Pontius Pilate heard that the Jews were publicly heralding a man from Nazareth as the messiah. Knowing the political significance of that news, Pontius Pilate ordered the messiah apprehended. When Jesus stood before him and refused to deny that he was the messiah, Pontius Pilate ordered his execution, and on his cross ordered written his crime, "King of the Jews." In the eyes of the Roman ruler, Jesus was a political revolutionist, a rebel who threat-

ened the power of imperial Rome and who was executed as so many Jewish revolutionary leaders had been by Rome's minions.

Jesus therefore died as a Jewish patriot, regarded by the masses of Jerusalem as their champion against the oppression of Rome. In dying as a martyr, his death was characteristically Jewish. Even as Jesus died at Calvary for an ideal, so have his people died on a hundred thousand Calvarys! The cross for the Jew was not merely erected in Jerusalem but the cross for the Jew has been erected in many lands throughout the ages. More than any other the Jewish people has worn the crown of martyrdom and more than any other it has seen its finest sons impaled on the cross of their idealism, dying the deaths of martyrs for the love of God and the love of man. Even as Jesus lived as a Jew, so did he die as a Jew.

Nor is the religion of Jesus alien to Judaism. The religion of Jesus was Judaism. The religion about Jesus, the religion which Paul preached in propagating the Jewish conception of God and the Jewish ideals of character throughout the pagan world, was and is alien to Judaism. Jesus taught the fatherhood of

God. Before him a prophet had taught, "Have we not one Father; has not one God created us all?" In the synagogue, Jesus learned to say, "Our Father; our King." Jesus spoke of the brotherhood of man and a prophetic teacher before him had stated, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Jesus taught the Golden Rule which Hillel had taught before him. When Jesus was approached by one of the scribes and asked to define the First Commandment, he replied as would have any Jew throughout the ages, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one," and "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," quoting again the teachings of the synagogue, the most important doctrines of Judaism, the unity of God and the brotherhood of man. But Jesus did not merely teach the spiritual essence of Judaism. He also taught the need of concrete reminders and the need of ceremonial observance. It was not Jesus but Paul who abolished the ceremonies of Israel for the Christian world. So it is that in every respect the religion which Jesus taught was Judaism, and when Christians today speak of Christian character they are merely referring to those ethical and spiritual

qualities which the Jew has prized throughout the ages.

Jesus was critical of the Jews of his age, and that again stamps him as characteristically the Jew. What Jew has not been critical of his brethren? What great Jew has not found flaws in Israel? Moses was so angered at the people he freed that he shattered the tablets containing the Ten Commandments. The prophets of Israel spared no invective in exposing the corruption, ethical and spiritual, which prevailed among their people. It is a poor teacher who only flatters his pupils and who fails to point out their deficiencies. The prophets of Israel, like Jesus, condemned the blind observance of ritual while the spiritual laws were ignored. Neither Jesus nor the prophets were opposed to ritual as such. They were too wise. They knew human nature well enough to know that man needs tangible symbols, concrete reminders, and poetic formulations of his faith and ideals. They did not object to ceremonies but they did object to ceremonies which failed to convey ethical idealism or spiritual values. They objected not to the use but to the abuse of ceremonies. The Jews of Jesus' day were by no means saints,

neither were the Jews of the days of the prophets. They needed inspired men to lash them into action, to excoriate them for their sins, to quicken their consciences, and to stir their hearts. Even in his criticism of his people, Jesus was Jewish.

Jesus had a profound influence on the destiny of his people. The Jews of the Middle Ages only saw its tragic effect. All they knew about Jesus was that they suffered because of him. All they knew was that they were persecuted because from the ranks of their ancestors had sprung one of the great religious prophets. But the time has come when the Jew can appreciate that Jesus has done more for Israel merely than to cause it suffering. Jesus has made of Israel a people of world importance. By his life he inspired a group of men through whom the history, the literature, the ethics, the poetry of the Jew, has been carried to the four corners of the earth. Go where you will and men will be acquainted with our history. No library is as widely cherished as is the library of ancient Israel—the Bible! No heroes are so universally glorified as are the heroes of Israel. No poets have received the acclaim that the Psalmists,

the poets of Israel, have received. All of this glory has been due to the influence of the personality of Jesus upon his followers. The fact that the Jew's literature, his heroes, his poets, his prophets, have won the admiration of men throughout the world; the fact that more sanctuaries are named after Jews than after the members of any people; the fact that men pray through his prayers and worship according to his rules, has given the Jew a sense of dignity and pride.

Jewish history, though in itself beautiful, when placed in the background of Christian development, becomes a tremendously powerful force. Through Christianity the Jew became of cosmic importance. He became a marked man, even as distinguished men are marked. The word "Jew," even though it brought suffering, became a badge of distinction; and sometimes I wonder whether envy of the Jews' kinship to Jesus was not one of the causes of the persecution at the hands of the followers of Jesus. Through Christianity, Jewish history was torn from its narrow setting in Palestine. The Jew ceased to be a petty provincial strutting upon the stage of Judea, but marched into

the theatre of world significance and became the most unique people in the history of the world. If it had not been for Christianity, we Jews might have been an insignificant sect of men, as insignificant as have been the followers of Zoroaster who had a great and noble religion and a dignified literature. But because of Christianity we have become and are a people of world importance who cannot be ignored wherever men will understand the forces which made our civilization possible. Jesus has profoundly influenced the history of his people.

Jesus has also affected profoundly the history of humanity in a Jewish way. It is true that the civilization in which we live and in which Christians predominate, is not a civilization in which the ideals of the religion of Jesus, of Judaism, are predominant. It is true that if Christians had really followed Jesus there would have been no World War, there would be no racial prejudice, there would be no national arrogance, there would be no starving unemployed, there would be no crime caused by poverty, there would be no ecclesiastical hierarchies, there would be no caste system, there would be no moneyed aristocracy!

But though the ideals of Jesus have not been attained in society, who can deny that his personality and the Judaism which his personality emphasized, have had their effect in softening the passions of the barbarians of Europe, have helped to civilize them, and have made for much of the kindness in modern society, have made even for that spirit which makes it possible for me freely and fearlessly to express my convictions. And I hope the time will come when the ideals of Jesus, the ideals of the synagogue, will be regnant throughout the world. The influence of Jesus on humanity has been religious and moral, and the genius of Israel has expressed itself along religious and moral lines. Jesus' influence on mankind has been Jewish.

As Christian thinking disentangles itself from the theology which served its purpose and returns more and more to the pristine beauty of the teachings of Jesus which were the teachings of the synagogue, the world will more and more approximate the ideals of which the great spirits of humanity have dreamed. It has frequently been said that the Jew seeks to conquer the world and to dominate society. The only type

of conquest and domination that the Jews desire is the triumph and victory of the ideals of justice, of righteousness and of peace. Jesus has been a powerful factor in propagating these ideals. For like the synagogue, Jesus has taught, "Not by might nor by strength but by my spirit, saith the Lord."

SUMMARY

SUMMARY

FROM Amos to Jesus! From Semitism to Judaism! This is the spiritual Odyssey of Israel. From the eighth century before the Christian Era on, there appeared a few religious rebels, among them Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Micah, Jeremiah, Deutero-Isaiah, the author of Jonah, and Jesus. Their age resented them and their message. But their revolution succeeded. They universalized, socialized, spiritualized, and ethicized the religion of their people. Out of Semitism they created Judaism. Out of Semites they forged Jews. With their appearance, morality and religion are united—social morality as well as personal morality. Religion ceased to be man communing with God. But religion became ethical, man at one with God. "Before man can be at one with God," said the rabbis of the Talmud, "he must be at one with his fellow-men." Mysticism is not only other-worldly. God does not draw man out of the world. He drives him into it. That belief we owe to the prophets.

Judaism and Christianity are both heirs of the prophetic tradition. Though it is, perhaps, more comfortable to make religion synonymous with mysticism, Jew and Christian cannot do so. Communion with God led the prophets to face, not to escape from life. Mysticism in the prophetic religion became the urge to social and personal righteousness. Personal righteousness is not enough. Social righteousness is bound up with spiritual living. In our complex social order, social ethics are essential, as essential as personal ethics. Such ethics have always been part of the prophetic religion, the heritage of Jew and Christian. For us religion is the impulse to social living, because it makes us aware of ultimate reality. The good life includes that of all of our neighbors in a world that is rapidly becoming a neighborhood.

Therefore, Jews and Christians cannot be spiritually satisfied merely with recital of correct creeds, nor with performance of poetic pageantry, nor with personal devotion, nor with public worship. Jews and Christians sensitive to their prophetic heritage must champion and live the prophetic ideals. If more Jews and Christians had done so, Lenin would not have

said that "religion is an opiate of the people," and anti-religion would not now be a subject taught in the schools of Russia. Prophetic religion cannot be limited to theology, to ritual, to worship. Those who desire so to limit it may fear the radical implications of prophetic religion. Radicalism is seen as a disease in our age. So also in the age of the prophets. From that disease, the prophets suffered, and some have dared to say that their disease has healing for all mankind.

To revere the prophets means to recognize the radical social implications of their message. In no other way can they be fittingly honored. To champion prophetic religion may not be easy today. It never was easy. The prophets, from Amos to Jesus, walked along the thorny road—enduring ostracism and martyrdom. Have we the character to walk in their footsteps and to relate to the life of our age, to concrete and to controversial issues, the prophetic religion? The problems that faced the prophets face us. Will we who glory in their lives rise to their heights? Is prophecy a closed chapter in human history, or is it an unfinished paragraph to which we may add a line? Our age cries for the living

God. Where are the prophetic spirits to feed its famished soul? We must not merely honor the prophets from Amos to Jesus. We must know that they gave mankind a great social message. But above all, we must never forget that that social message is modern.

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